

# Punch

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DOUGLAS.



Painted by John Aldridge

## Shell guide to HEREFORDSHIRE



In this border county there are villages with Welsh names. The Black Mountains in Wales rise on the sky-line. There are tumps and ruins of castles (1), and Hereford itself means "army ford", the ford by which soldiers crossed the Wye. A county worth defending — and raiding. Apples, pears, cattle and hops (2) are some specialities of its quick red earth and green meadows. Also a remnant of the fine oaks, which gave timber for Herefordshire's black-and-white farmhouses (3) and manor-houses. Oast-houses (4) and hop fields are less general than the apple and pear orchards, source of Herefordshire cider and perry. Open by an old cider-press (5) is John Philips' renowned poem on the making of cider, published in 1708 (6), a Herefordshire poem by a poet of Oxfordshire and Shropshire origins. The red and white Herefordshire cattle (7), a beef breed of world celebrity, were developed from draught oxen around King's Pyon, near Weobley, in the eighteenth century.

The Romanesque corbels of Kilpeck Church, the county's strangest and most intricately carved church, look down from the left on this imaginary Herefordshire landscape. Included also are two characteristic plants, the Autumn Crocus (8) in the foreground, which likes the Old Red Sandstone soils and slopes, and the Mistletoe (9), commoner here than in any county of England, growing from an apple tree above the head of one of the most famous of Herefordshire natives, Nell Gwyn (10), one of several actors and actresses born or bred, by odd contrast, in this most rural country.

The "Shell Guide to Wild Life", a monthly series depicting animals and plants in their natural surroundings, which gave to many people pleasure last year, is published in book form by Phoenix House Ltd. at 7/6. The "Shell Guide to Trees" and "Shell Guide to Flowers of the Countryside" are also available at 7/6 each. On sale at bookshops and bookstalls. In U.S.A. from Transatlantic Art. Inc., Hollywood by the sea, Florida, \$2.00

YOU CAN BE SURE OF



*The key to the Countryside*



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## The London Charivari

THE new currency notes have been slow in reaching me. To say that they probably caught this trick from the old ones would be to echo the jolly atmosphere of fourth-form fun which pervaded the House of Commons when the design came up for criticism. "Cheers and laughter" and "Renewed laughter and loud Ministerial cheers" greeted many sallies about people not minding the design if they could get plenty of them, or the desirability of the Chancellor's allowing more of them "to fructify in the pockets of the people." In comparing the notes to detergent coupons marked "3d. off" Mr. Harold Wilson missed a chance to raise Opposition cheers. He might have pointed out that, compared with 1948, they ought to be marked about "7s. 6d. off" actually.

### Keep Right on . . .

WHEN the Butlin Walk was officially declared closed, as if it were an innings, last Saturday, I wonder what the correct policy was for those steady openers planning a whirlwind



finish, over-delayed, still plodding along around Preston or Wellington? In the 440, or even the mile, where I have never heard a steward boom through

his megaphone "Stop trying, chaps" just because the first bunch are past the tape, the stragglers put up a game finish, but it must be a bit flat trudging through the Somerset and Devon highways with never a press photographer or kind old lady bustling out with teacups in sight. On the other hand, to sheath the sword, not lightly drawn, before the foe is vanquished is an un-English thing to do. Next year's rules might provide for a tortoise prize.

### Cutting Down Clutter

I WELCOME (who wouldn't?) the introduction by the advertising bodies of a code of standards designed



to eliminate "clutter" on business premises. Yet I can't help wondering how the code is going to restrain a village shopkeeper who receives an inducement for each "point of sale" advertisement he puts up. Displays, says the code, should "not be too many." Well, that leaves plenty of room for argument. "No advertisement shall obscure the view to any other advertisement." H'm! Posters on walls should be "reasonably far from the edges of the display area." Is a picture of a fiend from outer space, or a plate of beans, going to look any





Hollowood

"No, it's the other way round, mother—Mr. Dimbleby's doing the TV commentary and Geoffrey Fisher's conducting the ceremony."

more acceptable mounted nine inches (as recommended) from the edge of an old red wall?

#### Grannie Knows Best

**I**N his maiden speech in the House of Commons Mr. Charles Curran said that high teenage wages were eroding parental responsibility and suggested holding back a proportion of a teenager's money. I am not sure how this would work. Perhaps the State would use the retained cash to pay instalments on capital goods the teenager was assumed to want on reaching years of discretion, say a fully furnished house ready and waiting at thirty; though by then, of course, the beneficiary would have had so many years without any opportunity of learning to look after money that he would probably sell this official birthday present and blue the proceeds.

#### All Quiet

**I** WAS glad to see that the B.B.C. had circulated its producers and department heads with a "code of practice designed to stop unnecessary scenes of violence on B.B.C. Television." Apart from putting a rather inhibiting curb on the approaches of Robert Kee, John Freeman and Francis Williams, this means that we really have seen the last of those interesting eruptions by Gilbert Harding.

#### Make Believe

**I**N America the Columbia Broadcasting System have also introduced a new code. They are being realistic in their decision once more to allow "canned applause" in their shows, but not realistic enough, since they are insisting that there must be an acknowledgment in the programme that this "audience reaction" has been put in afterwards by electricity. This ignores the basic truth that all television entertainment is based on illusion. There isn't *really* a funny little four-inch man dancing in that box, but it is the object of the broadcasting companies to make us think there is. If it helps us to believe this when we hear laughter added from an electronic tape, then let's have it. After all, no one insists that there shall be a confession after, say, every half-hour with "The Third Man" that the music was recorded and not played by a couple of industrious Hungarians sited in the wings just out of camera range.

#### If None Write "None"

**I** SHOULD like to see the form which men in the United Arab Republic are going to have to fill in to prove they need a second wife. It is just the sort of thing the official mind revels in (maiden names of both grandmothers, previous convictions for wife-beating, and minuscule notes on the back). They'll have to categorize the different needs that can be proved;



"APPALLING design."

domestic, social, emotional and business, probably. And there won't be any of our lax English habit of issuing licences for "All Groups." The man who is already married to a beautiful numskull and feels the need for a cook-housekeeper-secretary will have to prove each separate need. And then he's got to find the girl.

#### Patients of IT

**R**ECENT reports of automation in the Operating Theatre, with conveyor-belts bringing instruments from the sterilizer and, for all I know, taking away bits removed from the patient, give yet one more chilling preview of the future. Surgery always seemed likely to be the last stronghold of the craftsman; now it is all too clearly falling into line. Machines, at first under the immediate supervision of surgeons, but all too soon guided by some kind of magnetized tape, will carry out a limited repertoire of operations. Thunderstorms or other electrical disturbances may switch the channel but the machines will go grimly on. Tireless, cold and working at ten times the speed of the slickest F.R.C.S., they will step up throughput figures and gladden the hearts of hospital administrators.

#### After You

**I**N London, at any rate, standards of politeness and consideration enjoyed their seasonal rise with last week's spring sunshine. One result was an oddly static scene at the door of a City tea-shop, where four men seemed to be waiting to go in, and two to come out, none caring to assert precedence. The deadlock was broken by one of the men inside, who said "Make your minds up, some of you. Me and my mate's working on the — door."

#### Sharpeville

(A South African policeman's song)

**L**AWS keep the Bantu race  
Decently in their place;  
Or, if we ever face  
A change of heart,  
A surer means is found,  
And six feet underground  
They lie apart.

— MR. PUNCH





DRAGON'S TEETH



## 1 **POLITICS AND PATRONAGE — By DON COOK**

**I**T is axiomatic that a foreign correspondent ought to go home periodically to refresh himself in his country's ways and attitudes. As I was about to sail for the United States on such a periodic visit, a letter from the Editor of *Punch* suggesting a contribution on "Politics and Patronage" in America gave added if hazardous point to the journey.

The closer the *Queen Mary* got to New York, in fact, the more hazardous the assignment seemed. I pondered the problem that no aspect of American political life stirs such automatically negative reaction and misunderstanding as the patronage question. Even the word is slightly odious—conjuring as it does the picture of a fat-faced political boss with a cigar in the corner of his mouth barking out orders to "the boys."

Yet patronage is a vital part of democracy in America and a very large and positive element in the machinery of American government. The difficulty which confronts Americans themselves constantly—not to mention the English with their puritanical regard for an unsullied Civil Service running their affairs—is distinguishing between the good and the bad in the patronage system.

My search for fresh and positive up-to-date 1960 answers did not begin very well. When the *Queen Mary* docked Manhattan was deep in the patronage case of its negro Borough President, Mr. Hulan Jack. Mr. Jack had reached

*A series of articles examining the charges frequently made against the United States of irresponsibility and corruption in the national life*

the most responsible elective office ever held in America by a member of his race—for the Borough Presidency of Manhattan does indeed carry more governmental authority and more patronage power than accrues to the negro congressmen who serve the Federal Government in Washington. Mr. Jack was in the throes of confessing to a Grand Jury how he came to permit a friendly building contractor with a vital interest in the issuing of building permits, which the Borough President's office controls in New York, to do a \$5,000 renovation job on the humble Jack apartment in Harlem for which no bills were ever rendered and no payment made.

There was not going to be much material in that one to explain the case for patronage. But there is one important element in the picture which does help to explain the whys and wherefores of patronage in America. Mr. Jack held a position of considerable power and authority in local affairs in New York city, and he was elected. The number of elective offices in the United States is enormous.

Americans do not merely elect a President, a Federal Congress, State governors and legislatures. They also

elect school board members, magistrates, city treasurers, district attorneys, mayors, justices of the peace, municipal judges, tax assessors, state judges, councillors, aldermen, sheriffs, marshals, registrars of wills and even coroners.

In orderly England it may be easy to decry lofty this American passion for electing people to jobs which ought sensibly to be left in the hands of life-time appointees from some Simon-Pure Establishment or other. But the fact remains that in America there is a much fuller, livelier and more intensive grass-roots participation of the people in government than exists in England or anywhere on the continent. Local politics in America, which seldom justify newspaper reporting outside the town itself, have a vitality all their own, for they stir the emotions and passions and offer opportunities of office right on the front doorstep.

Patronage is part of the pulling power that brings American citizens to seek office and to vote. This is not to say that men and women go into politics in America solely to be able to hand out jobs or contracts to their friends when they are elected. Idealism and issues of local government of course play the bigger part. But it is to the credit of the system that patronage is one of the reasons why Americans do participate much more fully in local politics than the British.

Nor is it without significance that in America a candidate "runs" for office while in Britain he "stands."

Nevertheless "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." With Lord Acton's gloomy thought I passed through Mr. Hulan Jack's borough of Manhattan and made my way to my own home city of Philadelphia.

"Corrupt and contented" Philadelphia had been labelled by Lincoln Steffens, the great American liberal journalist of the turn of the century, and through my Philadelphia boyhood in the pre-war years it had remained just as Steffens described it in 1904. Decade after decade Philadelphia was locked in the hands of a Republican Party "Establishment" which slowly squeezed all but the last drop of civic vitality out of one of America's great cities of true character.

Throughout the first half of this century a succession of faceless, faithful Republican hacks moved in and out of the Mayor's office every four years on election victories methodically delivered by the most efficient ward political machine in the nation. If you wanted your sewer fixed or a parking ticket torn up or a liquor licence or a job at City Hall you started out by having a talk with your Republican Party ward leader. The city was the ultimate despair of good local government in America. Nothing moved in Philadelphia. The place vegetated, stagnated. Philadelphia jokes were part of the nation's laughing stock. Progress passed it by. Even the coming of F.D.R. and the New Deal failed to break the

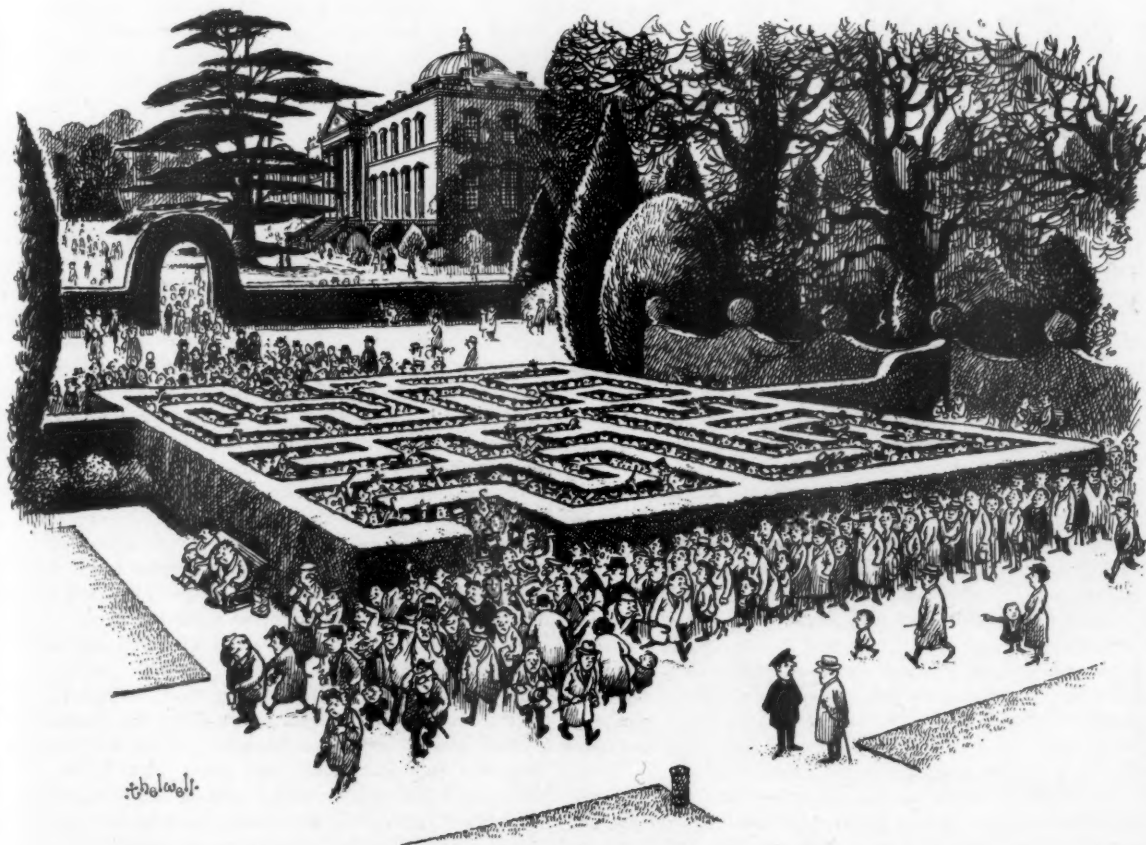
hold of the Republican machine over a corrupt and contented fiefdom.

But to-day, mercifully, Philadelphia is the most changed city in America and the object of political and sociological envy the country over.

The Philadelphia story of how good patronage replaced bad patronage and utterly revolutionized the moral, physical and political outlook of America's most stagnant city is now a classic in American politics—so much so that the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic has done a major study on the whole episode which it has titled "The Art of Government."

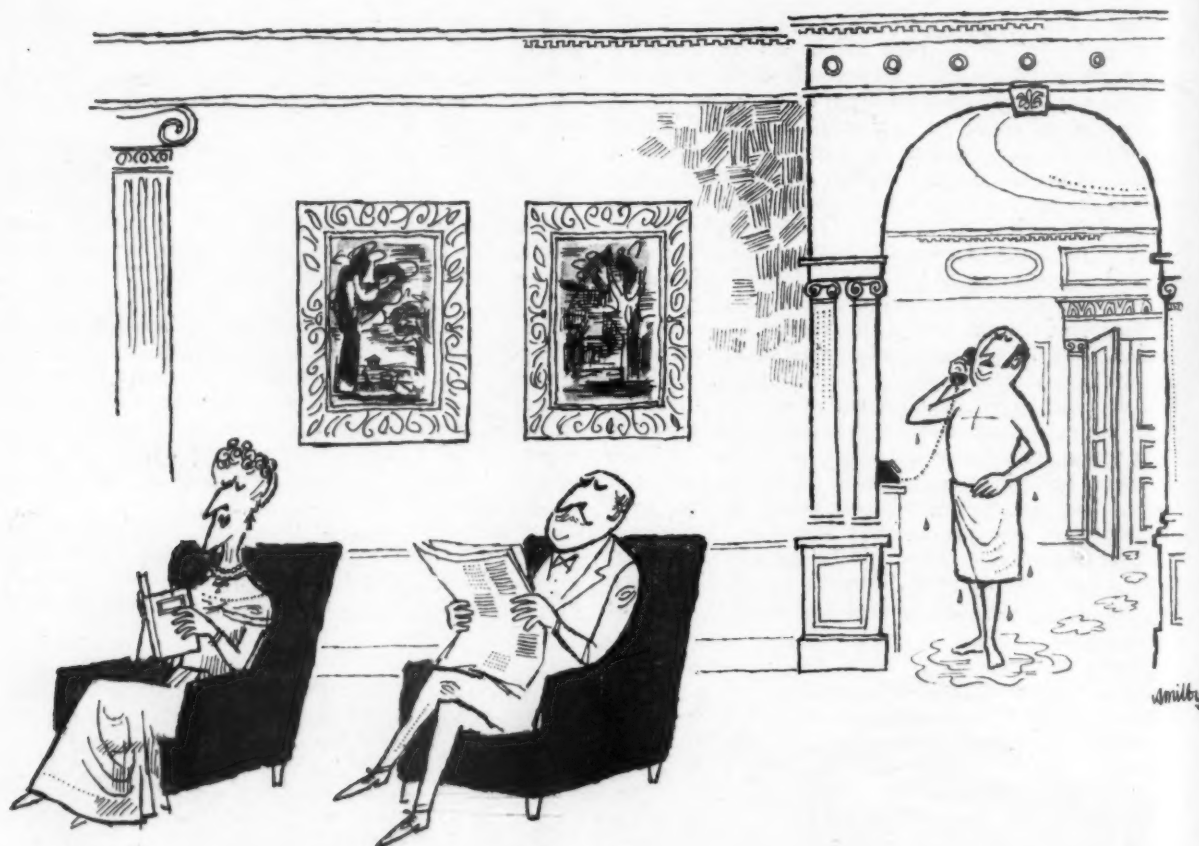
For a Philadelphian returning after a three-year absence it was only necessary to look at the amazing physical change in the city to realize what vast and exciting accomplishments are possible under good local government in America. New arterial highways cut and soar across traffic-logged streets. Slums have fallen, parks have risen, schools have been built, subways have been improved, new business and industry brought to the city.

If Waterloo Station were torn down, along with all the complex of railroad tracks leading to it, and moved about two miles back towards Clapham Junction to permit a whole new development of planned building similar to the Shell



"Of course it was never intended for this sort of traffic."





group on the South Bank, that would be the London equivalent of what has happened in downtown Philadelphia in a few short years.

The city's Dock Street market—its Covent Garden, about as central and about as congested and inefficient—has been banished to a spacious new modern location on the outskirts to make way for the blitzing of a vast area of Old Philadelphia in the environs of Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed and the American Constitution drafted.

Through all of this runs vibrant pride of progress, an almost burning civic sense of demolishing the worst of Philadelphia's past, preserving and beautifying the best, and letting in light and air for the future. I turned to the Ford Foundation report, then, to seek out the details of how patronage and politics had worked such a fantastic change in my old city.

In a complex story it was easy to pin-point the exact time when the corruption of absolute power of the old Republican machine produced its own self-destruction. The year was 1948, and it all began simply enough with a demand from the city's firemen for pay increases.

The occupant of the Mayor's office that year was an amiable Republican faithful named Bernard Samuel. He refused the grant increase on the ground that the city did not have sufficient funds, but he accompanied his refusal with the

classical political manoeuvre of setting up a "Committee of Fifteen" prominent citizens to examine the city's whole financial structure in the hopes of finding the money.

In the past in Philadelphia this would have been a pure whitewash operation. Prominent citizens would have been found in the Philadelphia Establishment who could be counted upon not to probe too deeply, and their report would have been an expression of contentment with corruption they did not explore. But by 1948 Philadelphia was about fed up with half a century of such shame.

The Committee of Fifteen proved alarmingly independent and determined. It hired research assistants from the University of Pennsylvania in the city—which has one of America's top schools of business administration—and went to work with a vengeance. It had the full backing of the Chamber of Commerce whose members were getting fed up with kickbacks and petty graft, and it had the backing of the newspapers too.

In short order it uncovered proof of well-organized systems of extortion in the Fire Marshal's office, the Department of Public Works, the Water Bureau and the Department of Supplies and Purchases. It found that clerks in the Receiver of Taxes' office were extorting money on a regularly-established rate-card from persons applying for various kinds of municipal licences. Then an employee of the Amusement Tax Office committed suicide, leaving a note which

implicated others in the department in embezzlement. More suicides followed, finally that of the chief of the Police Vice Squad.

The whole half-century structure of Philadelphia graft and corruption began to cave in. Indictments against the city Fire Marshal and several other officials followed. A number of criminal convictions were obtained. Reform was on the way—and in 1949 the voters of the city swept the Democrats to power at long last, and a whole new echelon of patronage appointees with them.

One of the first acts of the reform administration, incidentally, was to place many of the City Hall jobs on a Civil Service basis. But patronage plays a major political role still.

In fact, despite the sweeping changes in the outlook for Philadelphia, the Ford Foundation report found "a sense of moral frustration" in the reformers because the movement "has suffered one real failure: it has failed to change in any fundamental way the practice of politics in the city." One patronage system has replaced another.

But about this the report is philosophical: "Balancing faults with virtues the party system must receive surprisingly high marks. It has served both the individual and the nation well. The party boss may appear a formidable figure, but he is only as strong as he is permitted to be by the failure of citizens to express their will through participation in organized politics."

I continued my journey on to Washington—seat of the Federal Government and of far-reaching Federal patronage throughout the United States. But while it is the Federal Government that reflects solely and constantly the image of America abroad, it nevertheless is local government which is the real heart of American politics.

In England there is nothing comparable to the autonomous local administrations of America—hotly contested with powers jealously guarded over such simple but vital matters as building of schools, promulgation of liquor regulations or building specifications, fixing of teachers' and police salaries or bond interest rates. No "Ministry of Local Government" looks over their shoulders, and the results may be chaotic but they are undeniably democratic.

The patronage of Washington is of yet another kind, vaster but more remote from the people's lives than local patronage. For example, the appointment of federal judges is a patronage operation in the hands of the White House—yet once a judge has been rewarded with his robes he passes to a position of independence which at only rare historical intervals has been blotted by political scandal.

Then I reached Florida where this is being written. It is a state whose administration has been in the hands of the Democratic Party longer than Philadelphia was Republican. Everybody knows that a Democrat will be elected governor once again later this year. But so far no fewer than nine Democrats have signified their intention of fighting for the nomination. In a one-party state, in other words, the struggle for power is just as great as if not greater than in the states where Republicans and Democrats fight it out with equal chances.

I had travelled by now some 1,500 miles along America's eastern seaboard, and the rest of America stretches another 3,000 miles inland. So vast and heterogeneous a land could never be brought under any kind of centrally-directed, Civil

Service-operated administration. There has to be strong local government, and patronage is part of the system.

Patronage in American politics is not, therefore, to be condemned. Of course it produces its Hulan Jacks and its tax evasions and its Vicuna coats and even, occasionally, its crooked judges. But America on the whole is a remarkably well-governed, honestly-governed country whose officials submit themselves to the verdict of the electorate in far greater numbers with far greater frequency than those who govern England. Patronage produces its weeds but it holds the seeds of its own perennial new political growth.

Must it always be so—is not something a little more orderly possible in America? At the end of my journey I turned to the writings of a much earlier traveller, Alexis de Tocqueville, who, in his classic and perceptive *Democracy in America*, wrote in 1832:

"Gross instances of social indifference and neglect are to be met with; and from time to time disgraceful blemishes are seen, in complete contrast with the surrounding civilization. In America the power that conducts the administration is far less regular, less enlightened and less skilful but a hundredfold greater than in Europe. In no country in the world do the citizens make such exertions for the common weal. I know of no people who have established schools so numerous and efficacious, places of public worship better suited to the wants of the inhabitants, or roads kept in better repair.

"Uniformity or permanence of design, the minute arrangement of details, and the perfection of administrative system must not be sought for in the United States; what we find there is the presence of a power which, if it is somewhat wild, is at least robust, and an existence chequered with accidents, indeed, but full of animation and effort."

Alexis, we are still at it!

#### Further contributors will include:

MALCOLM BRADBURY  
D. W. BROGAN  
ALISTAIR COOKE  
EMILY HAHN

DREW MIDDLETON  
IAN NAIRN  
VANCE PACKARD  
HARRISON SALISBURY



"It's your father's fault, children—he rubs everyone up the wrong way."

# What, no Jewel-headed Cobras?

By E. S. TURNER

EVERYONE admires the Ministry of Works. It is the department which props up castles, mends clocks, picks up litter in the royal parks, grabs spa hotels in war-time and, at long intervals, lays on displays of fireworks.

On April 5 the Ministry is to stage a high-grade firework *fiesta* in St. James's Park for President de Gaulle, the first in that park since the victory celebrations of 1814.

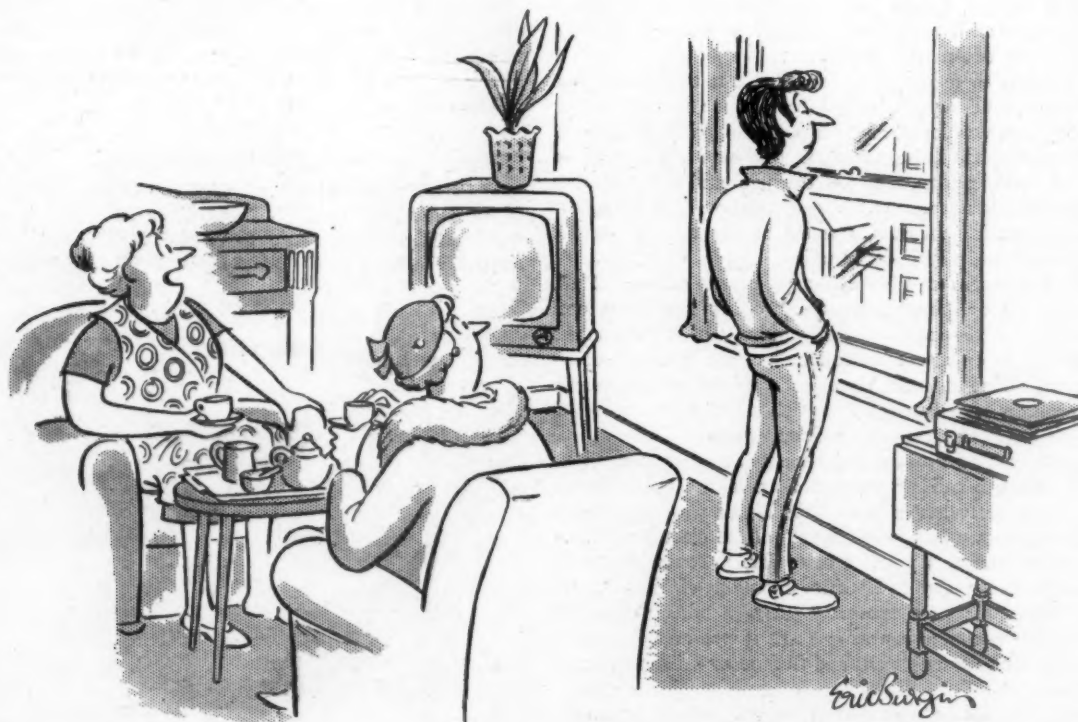
The Press Officer at the Ministry insists that there is no permanent department dealing with fireworks but, with respect, I do not think he has looked properly. Somewhere at the end of a long corridor is an office tenanted by an old man who knows all about precedent and protocol in terms of pyrotechny. It would save a good

deal of trouble if they could find him. As it is, the Lord Chamberlain has had to go into a huddle with a number of Civil Servants who, however knowledgeable they may be in their own spheres, simply do not have fireworks at their finger-tips. It was so much easier in the old days when all you had to do was to send for the Master-General of the Ordnance and his Firemasters and tell them to repeat the show they gave after the Treaty of Ryswick.

It is not hard to picture a fireworks conference at the Ministry. "We haven't enough revolving suns," says a Principal. "The public always likes revolving suns. And what about those things that go all over the sky saying *eeek eek*?" An Under-Secretary says "You mean hissing scorpions?" but a

Senior Engineer corrects him, "Hissing serpents." They glower at each other. "What about a grand Girandole?" suggests an Under-Secretary. "What is a grand Girandole?" asks a Chief Executive Officer, and is told to go away and wind his clocks. They then discuss whether to order a crop of *fleurs-de-lys*, and if so in what colour. After a few hours of this the contractor rises and says "Gentlemen, if you will give me £10,000, or better still £20,000, and leave the details to me I think I can promise you something of which the nation need not be ashamed." They thank him profusely and go back to their dry rot and bird sanctuaries.

The Ministry's hand-out on the forthcoming display, while satisfactory up to a point, does not really stir the imagination. It is gratifying, no doubt, that



"He's mad on sport. He could tell you the names of every player in the TV Showbiz Eleven."



there are to be more than one thousand multi-coloured star shells fired in sixty-five bursts, that aerial minefields are to be detonated, and so forth. But connoisseurs will demand more precise information than this. In 1919, when the victory firework display was held in Hyde Park, there were eighty-four items on the programme, all named with a wild poetic fancy which is not to be found nowadays even in a *brassière* advertisement. They included:

*The Mammoth Lattice of Flickering Snowspray*  
*Thirty-Two Batteries of Jewel-Headed Cobras*  
*The Imperial Amber Aigrettes*  
*The Radiant Empire Suns*  
*The Aerial Bank of Daffodils and Bluebells*  
*The Shower of Liquid Radium*  
*The Iridescent Peacock Plumes*  
*Thirty-Two Batteries of Gold Comets*  
*The National Cloudbreak*  
*A Special Colossal Fire Portrait of the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George*  
*A Flight of Cheering Nightbirds*  
*A Mossy Bank Which Gradually Turns Into A Bed Of Violets*  
*An Aerial Field Of Cloth Of Gold Studded With Rubies And Changing To Jewelled Streamers*  
*A Flight Of Lacewing Moths*  
*The Aerial Golden Wheatheaf*  
*The Sparkling Incandescent Globules*  
*Thirty-Two Batteries Of Saucissons Reported.*

Do not worry too much about that last item. My own guess is that it is a misprint and that "Reported" should have been "Exploded." Who has not seen sausages exploding in the sky?

I may mention in passing that *The Times* sent an inexperienced man to write up this display and he actually admitted that he could not tell a swarm of silver fireflies from a cluster of jasmine sprays. He was fascinated by what he called "some hundreds of golden curlywigs that squirmed in the air." I hope Printing House Square will do better than this on April 5.

The Ministry says its display will include a double depiction of the Cross of Lorraine, but it does not reveal whether there is to be a fire portrait of President de Gaulle. This, of course, is a delicate subject. At the 1946 victory celebrations *The Times* rather pointedly described the set-piece portraits of the King and Queen as "portraits." Back in 1884, as that old man in the Ministry could tell you, there was trouble when the King of the Maoris sharply criticized the fire portrait



"To me you're just a father figure, cock."

presented in his honour at the Crystal Palace. His displeasure was due (I quote Mr. Alan St. H. Brock) to "the colour in which the lines of his intricate facial tattoos were rendered." Two years before that, Cetewayo, King of the Zulus, had also been singularly unimpressed by his likeness, possibly because it was not etched in black fire, possibly because only his head was shown, and not his body and legs.

These examples will show the pitfalls that may attend even the best-intentioned fire portraiture. Let us dare to suppose that the nose of the French President were to go on glowing when the rest of his lineaments had died out. Would that make the *entente* any more *cordiale*? It is lucky, I feel, that we did not offer Mr. Khrushchev his portrait in fire. Think of the opportunities for sabotage. What if an Empire Loyalist had arranged for a fiery boil to explode on the back of that bull neck? Suppose his left eye had been made to glow green and his right eye red? The fate of nations must not be jeopardized by such possibilities as these.

I hope that the display on April 5 will be brisker than the last one in 1814. On that occasion the fireworks were frittered away at a miserly rate and at the end of two hours the populace had grown tired of saying "Oooh!"

at solitary jerbes and flower-pots. The tedium was relieved, however, when a huge Chinese pagoda built on a bridge over the lake was seen to have caught fire. A workman hurled himself from the top, but hit the bridge and was killed. Others were badly injured. Misfortune alone made the night memorable.

Which reminds me. When the victory display was held on the Thames in 1946 the St. John Ambulance men treated a new patient every three minutes for injuries, mostly facial, received from falling débris. Watch those hissing scorpions.

## Heads I Win, Tails You Lose

I BOUGHT a hat for £7. 4.

"Damn nearly ten" he said.

"If you go on much more like this You'll have us in the red."

He bought a shirt for £7. 4.

I swore "Well—sakes alive—

How could you!" All he said was

"Well,

It's not much more than five."

— PAMELA HOARE

# Island Fling

By CLAUD COCKBURN

*A Souvenir of the Mitford Country*

EVERYONE who has read newspapers for the past twenty-five years or so knows about the Mitford family, the six daughters of the second Baron Redesdale. Nancy, a woman of enormous talent, wrote bright books and broke the champagne bottle at the launching of that deplorable U and non-U business. Unity, who believed in Hitler, died young. The one who said in her teens that she wanted to be a duchess, Deborah, achieved this ambition. Another, Diana, married Sir Oswald Mosley. Pamela married into the Royal Air Force.

That leaves Jessica, who wanted to be a Red, assist the down-trodden of the world, and do the family grown-ups a bit of dirt. Under the—to me—odiously repellent title of *Hons and Rebels* (Gollancz, 18/-), Jessica Mitford, who is now Mrs. Treuhaft of San Francisco, has written a book about her childhood and early youth and middle youth which everyone agrees is a truthful and candid account of what girls like the Mitford girls felt in and about the nineteen-thirties. Jessica Mitford once set off an explosive set of chain reactions (with myself somewhere in the middle of them) which I still treasure in memory as vividly typical of what the Americans have

agreed we must call the British Way of Life.

Act I of this politico-domestic drama opened in San Francisco, May 1945, when everyone from Molotov to Rita Hayworth to the highest-paid crystal-gazer in New York had trekked to San Francisco to help found the United Nations and—keeping our fingers crossed—to arrange for some good to come out of much evil.

I had never met Mrs. Treuhaft, but she and her husband were kind and hospitable to me beyond—as the saying goes—the line of duty, and just before I left San Francisco Mrs. Treuhaft disclosed to me a plan she had which she felt would be stimulating and beneficial.

It emerged that the Mitford family was in possession of a very small island somewhere off the coast of Scotland and that, by some quirk of Scottish law, the island—following the death in action of Lord Redesdale's only son—had to become the property of six parties; that is, of the elder Redesdales considered as a single unit, and of five daughters. Each of these units had a right to one-sixth.

And what Mrs. Treuhaft thought would be a very good idea was that she should deed over her share to the Communist Party of Great Britain. As a romantically minded sympathizer with

the organization—one, that is to say, whose foot had usually tapped in time with the tunes played by that little combo—she thought that it would be nice indeed for the Communists to have a few square healthy, heathery miles of a Scottish island to disport and relax in, a kind of miniature Caledonian Sochi.

She had, however, a light in her eye. And when she said, not once but again and again, that of course it was a *very small* island, and a bit of it was occupied by a house where—I understood—her parents liked to retire and relax occasionally, I had rather more than a suspicion that she had in mind something a little more spicy than just the welfare of ozone-starved Communists. And this suspicion was strengthened by a conversation with a person claiming to know her well. What, said this person, could possibly be more delightful to this lifelong enemy of the grown-ups, than the mental picture—however unrealistic—of a horde of unbridled Reds cavorting Marxistically on the beaches, rattling the windows of “the Big House” with nightly renderings of “Hurrah for the Bolshevik Boys” and the “Internationale”?

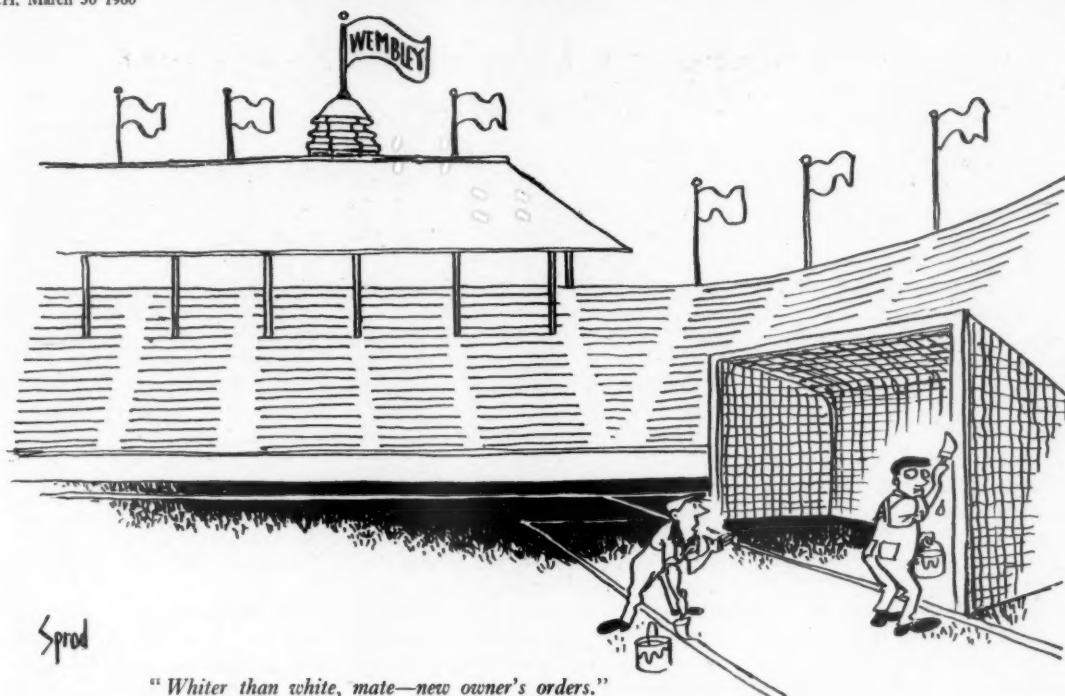
Knowing the Communist Party of Great Britain possibly rather better than did Mrs. Treuhaft, I doubted whether this picture would ever really get painted. However, when she urged me, to accept from her a power of attorney, entitling me to hand her bit of the islet over to the Communist Party, I did so and returned to London a few weeks later with this strange document in my pocket.

The Communist leadership, as I had vaguely surmised, was not enthusiastic. Peering into the mouth of the bizarre gift-horse, these men asked “What in hell does anyone think we can do with a small little bit of a desolate island somewhere off the coast of Scotland? Who, in the name of God, would want to go there? And what would they do there if they went?”

Feeling that Mrs. Treuhaft would be disappointed by such an attitude, I suggested that since this sector of the island seemed to be legally theirs, they



“You know perfectly well I always went through it at 40 when it said 30, so why shouldn’t I go through it at 50 when it says 40?”



"Whiter than white, mate—new owner's orders."

might do themselves a bit of good and still carry out what I felt sure were Mrs. Treuhart's intentions by selling it to some noisy evangelical sect or a nudist organization.

While this was under debate a message arrived for me saying that Lord Redesdale would like to see me. It was immediately apparent that—by direct or indirect means—Lord Redesdale had learned his daughter's impish intention. I made an appointment to meet him at the House of Lords on the following afternoon.

As a lobby correspondent of fairly long standing I was a familiar figure to the policemen on duty in the Palace of Westminster. One of these now approached me and said "Lord Redesdale's waiting for you. Seems a bit nervous. Asked me to keep the two of you in view all the time."

"Why on earth?" I asked.

"Never know with Bolshies," said the policeman, "thinks you're going to bomb him or do him with an ice-pick, I shouldn't wonder."

And indeed during the first phase of our interview poor Lord Redesdale did seem about as nervous as a man would be who thinks his *vis-à-vis* may at any moment make with some lethal weapon. After some agitated preliminary chit-

chat he inquired whether his daughter had indeed done this thing about the island, and, on being told that she had, said "You do realize it's a *very small* island, don't you, Mr. Cockburn? I mean, I don't know that any of us—I mean we and the Communists—would be very *happy* in the circumstances."

When I assured him that on this point the Communist Party saw eye to eye with him he sighed in almost incredulous relief, and in a matter of minutes we had agreed that the Communist Party would sell him back their bit of sea-girt rock for whatever an independent valuer in Oban assessed as a fair figure.

Such was his astonishment and pleasure at being neither stabbed nor invaded by Red hordes, Lord Redesdale began to tell me in a good deal of detail how very, very difficult it was to be the father of such daughters as he had—one of them using a diamond ring to cut swastikas on the window panes of the ancestral home and later seeming to fall in love with Hitler, another abandoning a marriage into the Guinness family in favour of marriage to Sir Oswald Mosley, and a third using the diamond ring to decorate the window panes with hammers and sickles and later making a runaway

marriage with a man who, despite being a nephew of Winston Churchill, was one of these Communists or Anarchists or worse.

"The newspapers," he told me, his voice trembling with emotion, "keep calling me a Fascist. Just because one of them took a picture of me shaking hands with Oswald Mosley. Well, I ask you, Mr. Cockburn, what could I do considering the man was my new son-in-law and the occasion was in his honour? What would you have done in the circumstances?"

I said I sympathized a good deal with his predicament, and we parted in an atmosphere of satisfaction with work well done. Around £300, as I recall, was what the valuer said the bit of island was worth, and the Communist Party was as quietly pleased as Lord Redesdale.

Just before the deal was consummated a cable arrived from Mrs. Treuhart in San Francisco saying that the sale of her share to Lord Redesdale had not been at all what she had envisaged. My power of attorney was, by this emphatic cable, categorically revoked. I felt surer than ever that my surmise regarding that light in the eye which I had noted in San Francisco had been correct.



# Nor a Lender Be

By T. S. WATT

"I'M doing a little asphaltting job just round the corner," said the man, "and I'd be glad if I could borrow your roller."

"Well—" I said.

"Save me getting my big one up from the village."

"Well—"

"Have it back in two or three hours."

"Well—"

"Put a new handle on it for you."

"All right."

That was three weeks ago, and yesterday, listening hopefully for clanking sounds, the thought suddenly came to me that perhaps I should never see my roller again. Ever since then . . .

The big detective's bloodshot eyes wavered uneasily before the impersonal stare of the trim, well-knit stranger who confronted him so coolly across the untidy desk.

"What can I do for you?" he asked at last.

The other leant forward in silence until his sensitive, well-bred features were a bare inch from those of his questioner.

"I'm afraid you'll think I'm an awful fool," he said evenly, "but I've lost my garden roller . . ."

The police sergeant gnawed his lower lip irritably. "I don't like it," he said.

His companions, a fresh-faced young constable and a pleasant, intelligent looking man of early middle age, eyed him interrogatively.

"He's up there all right," said the sergeant, "but my guess is that he's carrying a gun. Now what I propose is this: I'll go to the top of the stairs and call to him. In the meantime you, Evans, will climb up the drain-pipe to his window. Directly you hear me put my shoulder to the door I want you to break in and take him in the rear. Mr. Watt, you'd better wait at the bottom of

the stairs. If he gets past me, blow this whistle as hard as you can and hit him on the head with your walking-stick. Right?"

"Right."

"Right."

"But first we'd better make sure that he really *is* there. Evans, just nip up and have a butcher's through the key-hole. Quietly, mind. The slightest sound and it might very well be curtains for all of us."

"Haden't that better be my job, sergeant?" said Watt quietly. "After all, I got you into this. If there's danger—"

"No, no, Mr. Watt," said the sergeant firmly, "I couldn't think of it. It's our business, taking risks. It's what we're paid for. But before Evans goes I'd like to say this—and I know he's with me one hundred per cent: I thank you in the name of the Force."

The two men exchanged a quick handshake as the constable disappeared



"Seconds out the ring!"

silently up the stairs. He was back again in a moment, his face alight with excitement. "He's there," he said, "—and he has the roller! . . ."

The hotel dining-room was crowded, and a deafening chatter arose from the cheerful throng. The tall figure in the well-cut dinner-jacket paused for a moment at the entrance and then threaded his way swiftly to a small table at which a strikingly beautiful girl was dining alone. Giving a stiff, rather old-fashioned bow, he seated himself opposite to her. "Act as though nothing unusual had happened," he said quietly. "Laugh and talk naturally. Ha, ha, ha."

"Ha, ha, ha. Is it a message from Keith?"

A waiter hovered anxiously, to be dismissed with a curt "Shepherd's pie and a kummel."

"Forgive me if I seem abrupt. This is an urgent matter. I want help, and only you can give it. If I may say so, you are unusually beautiful. The most hardened villain would be as wax in

your hands. Don't look so startled. We may be watched. The slightest suspicion and all my plans would come to nothing. Act naturally. Ha, ha, ha."

"What do you want me to do? Ha, ha, ha."

"Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. I want your help in tracing a small garden roller . . ."

The Bishops assembled in Convocation looked up in surprise at the sudden entrance of a lithe, intellectual-looking man in casual though well-cut tweeds. Their surprise changed to amazement as, putting aside restraining hands with perfect sang-froid, and with a slight smile on his clean-cut, distinguished face, he made his way unhesitatingly to the exalted seat of their leader.

"Forgive me for troubling you," he said easily, in a pleasant, cultured voice, "but I should like your help in a small personal problem. A few weeks ago a man called at my house . . ."

Bring it back soon, there's a good chap.



spirited Foundation, employ teachers of sufficiently high calibre for our needs. We thank Mr. P. Danby-ffathers, late of the *Morning Post*, for his assistance in formulating our demands.

☆☆☆ Boy Cadets at the Alderman Creech Maritime Training School for Slum Orphans are working to rule until the curriculum is liberalized. A spokesman, who prefers to remain anonymous, told a Press Conference that virtually no attention was paid to the Fine Arts, Drama, the cultivation of an Aesthetic Sense of Puppetry. "All the Bo'sun-Instructors care about is giving you the rope's end if you can't climb fast enough," he added rather bitterly.

☆☆☆ John Hopkins (15) is lying on a bed of nails outside Pottery Tous Saints Town Hall until homework is introduced in Remand Homes. Questioned by a B.B.C. reporter he said he was doing it on behalf of his kid brother "and all kid brothers, everywhere."

☆☆☆ The Young Conservative Branch at the Honourable Radegunde Kidd's Riding School is threatening a Mass Lock-In unless corporal punishment is immediately introduced.

☆☆☆ The Staff of Mexborough Comprehensive School are striking against the inadequate duration of Staff Meetings. "We never get a long enough look at the Headmaster," said the Senior Geography Mistress, who is acting as Convener of the Strike Council.

☆☆☆ "Judd must go" read the banners carried in Sunday's Monster Parade of St. Wulwith's College, Oxford. Leaflets were handed out complaining that the tutor in Classical Languages and Literature was sometimes as much as five issues behind with the *Classical Review* . . .

— R. G. G. PRICE

## Educational Strife Spreads

*From all over Britain are coming reports of strikes, protests and even long-distance marches by students unsatisfied with the severity of their education*

☆☆☆ The D Stream of Montgomery and Attlee Junior Technical College, Pigge's Prior, have sent telegrams to the Minister of Education, the Chairman of the County Council, Mr. Nabarro, Mr. Colin Wilson and Lady Lewisham demanding the introduction of Greek. "We are browned off with being treated underprivileged," said a spokesman yesterday.

☆☆☆ The Finishing Set, Old Lavender College for the Daughters of Gentlewomen, are insisting on the inclusion of Judo in the curriculum. Until their request is granted, they propose to refuse to appear in the school production of *The Frog*.

☆☆☆ In protest against alleged over-indulgent marking, the combined Sixth Forms of all Plyfield Schools are walking by night to hand in a letter of reproof at the offices of the Northern Universities Joint Examination Board. They are taking a route that will carry

them through some of the roughest country in Britain.

☆☆☆ Boys at Sharkhaven Closed Borstal have started a stay-in strike against what a hand-out describes as "A square syllabus." They are sending marked copies of the Crowther Report to the Managers.

☆☆☆ The following communication has been nailed to the door of the Parish Church, Bullham-St. Elspeth's: We, the undersigned scholars of the Parochial Sunday School, wish to bring to the notice of the public the deficiencies of the instruction provided for us, at a time when close textual study of the Scriptures should draw upon such ancillary disciplines as Papyrology. Unless, and we say this with full comprehension of the consequences involved, we are given teaching commensurate with our needs, we shall secede and, pooling our resources, plus, we hope, a grant from some public-

The "Financial Times" is said to be starting a gossip double

# Three empty seats in the stalls in Act Two

## William City

**T**HAT comedy of high finance, Mr. William Dullitt's "They Sold Their Grandmothers," had a happy trio of millionaires in the front row of the stalls when the curtain rose on last night's first night. When it rose again on Act Two their seats were vacant.

**Lord Candell, Sir Petwood Dysher and Mr. Isaac Troll** had ordered their cars and gone home.

"The play was a mass of inaccuracies," Lord Candell told me when I telephoned. "The author talked about Trade Bills when he meant Treasury Bills, and didn't seem to have any idea of the difference between rates of exchange and purchasing-power parity."

Sir Petwood felt just as strongly. "Are we to believe that the play's

hero could run a £30m. corporation and carry on an affair with a rival financier's secretary? She would have put her business allegiance first every time. Besides, the fellow talked about 'buying' cigars. A man in his position would get boxes of the things by every post."

Mr. Troll had already gone to bed, with a file of the latest reports from SUNFED (Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development), his wife **Lady Naomi Troll**, told me. He was very

much upset, and hoped that the reports would act as a sedative.

## FINANCE AND ROMANCE

**W**HAT more delightful present from groom to bride than a block of shares in Gobbling and Whitefall? "It is the most romantic thing that has ever happened to me," said Mrs. **Harvey Gobbling** to a circle of envious guests sipping champagne

in the company's Fenchurch Street boardroom yesterday. An hour before she had been **Miss Mary Tinney** of the well-known rubber family. Said her husband proudly: "I suppose it isn't every man who can hand over 100,000 Ordinary 5s. shares at the altar."

## THIRD MAN?

**W**HO is our most modern millionaire? I have no hesitation in nominating **Lord Bleakwell** of Amalgamated Amalgams. I found myself queuing behind him in the Guildhall cloakrooms after the great luncheon yesterday and asked whether it was true that he is the richest man in Britain. His reply: "Last year cheques worth £18,438,000,000 passed through the Bankers' Clearing House. I try to remember that less than one-half of one per cent of the

## SITTING STILL

**I**HAVE been taking a look at the office-furnishing novelty of the week—the swivel desk in the Chairman's room at Fielding Stumperly's, Draper's Garden. **Sir Richard Stumperly** told me: "I was using too much energy swivelling my chair. Now the chair is fixed, and the desk swivels." It is power-operated, the touch of a small pearl button. "I feel much less tired by the time my car comes round at 3.30," says Sir Richard.

## A CATFOOD FACTORY OR A HAYFIELD?

Head of mammoth "Puppibik" and "Pussibik," **LORD LYMPH** expects to meet "a certain degree of opposition" in his fight for more factory-space in Britain. (His full-page advertisement is on page 10.)

"It is time to put a stop to all this sentimental twaddle about green belts and areas of scheduled landscape value," he told me to-day, "to say nothing of bird sanctuaries. Who ever made a fortune out of puffins?"

Lord Lymph's campaign coincides with the publication of a short but vigorous book\* on the subject. He does not expect to make money from the book. "But if I do, all the better!"

\*"You Can't Eat Scenery" Hoodoo & Jellie, 5s 6d



## The sto

**I**T looks as if **Sir Borrowdale** desires to mentally Binks meant every word when he described his latest acquisition, the 400-shop grocery store after hitherto known as Lang's many independent Corner Stores, as his last deal." He has bought a twenty-acre estate on the Copoly bean island of Alquate.

"No," he told me. "This is no sense a take-over, or a business deal of any kind—unless you come along with an offer that I can make a very considerable profit."

This does not seem like Sir Borrowdale plans to move his 30-room house very much longer.



...doubt advice has been sought in experienced quarters.

# PENNY'S IN THE MONEY (OF AN EGG-HEAD FRIEND)

To-day's Cinderella story is a story with a difference. In the name-part, Penelope Camwheel, a poor stenographer in the packing department of Withenmaw, Shortbread, who never expected to make more than her fixed salary-scale, £15 p.w.

Whether the late Lord Shortbread was the Fairy Godmother or the Prince Charming isn't easy to say. But there is Penny (or Cinders) in the middle of three quarters of a million or so (that's a cupboard full behind her), AND IT'S ALL HERS, under the terms of the Shortbread will. Penny couldn't believe it when the firm's lawyer broke the news, so on a seeing's believing basis she went along to Glyn Mills to convince herself.

£ £ £

Penny owes it all to her kindness of heart. Lord Shortbread, a known connoisseur of the arts, and then in his early eighties, happened to get into conversation with her one afternoon at Pimpole's Galleries. They became friends, and subsequently had many enjoyable outings together. "Stately homes, and that," as Penny puts it. There were visits to the Tate, to the Old Vic, to the Festival Hall, the Montagu Museum, Madame Tussaud's, Battersea Pleasure Gardens, the Royal Court. "Honestly, I didn't really know what it was all about," says Penny, "but it gave the old boy kicks, and after all, he was my boss."

£ £ £

It was only when the will was proved that she knew how dearly those "kicks" had been treasured. What Lord Shortbread never knew was that Penny was only at the Pimpole Galleries that day sheltering from the rain.



## Master of mergers bids for the sun

...desire. It is to be called, "The Corner Store" and the bedrooms will be very comfortable after some of Sir Borrowdale's many successful transactions in Ironmongery, the Drapery, the Bookbinding, the Sec-Saw (the Binks Company in recreation-ground adjacent for children is well known), the Soup Room, and so on. "I hope to carry the theme into my grounds," says Sir Borrowdale, "it is difficult to hit on past projects that lend themselves. How can I commemorate my mountain Fruit adventure with my mangery, for a start, and

International Pavings will be with me on every path I walk."

As might be expected of the owner of Universofone Electronics, the house will not be short of reproduced music, and every room will have its concealed radios and record-players, between fifty and sixty of each.

I asked Sir Borrowdale how he planned to spend his leisure. Would he not miss the hurly-burly of high finance, where millions could turn on a telephone call? "Millions still could," was the reply. "I shall continue to keep in touch, of course."

Alquate is too small to be shown on the maps, a mere ten miles by six. With its blue seas, coral beaches and swaying palms it is a true island paradise, though as yet it has no television. "I might look into that," said the new owner of "The Corner Store." "I should have to charge a pretty stiff licence fee, as the population is small, but the natives don't seem to have much to do in the evenings, and the idea might go well. A chain of coffee-bars with Universofone juke-boxes shouldn't come amiss either. We shall have to see."

I telephoned Lady Binks, who

has been staying with friends in Scotland for two years, to ask her what she thought about her new life on Alquate, but she didn't know what I was talking about.

### QUOTE:—

"They used to say art knows no frontiers. Now they're saying that science knows no frontiers. What about money knowing no frontiers? Or are markets to dip every time someone invents a bigger bomb?" —Sir William Harshfoot-Gow, at Moscow Airport, as leader of the Anglo-Russian Lentils Mission

# Have B.A.— Will Travel



Further jottings from  
the Diaries of A. J. WENTWORTH  
as recorded by H. F. Ellis

## 7. A Glimpse of Italy

IT is no surprise, naturally, to find so many foreigners in Switzerland, but one had expected them to be Swiss.

Or, to look at it from the Swiss point of view (as I make a point of trying to do when abroad—when in Switzerland, that is to say, and of course, *mutatis mutandis*, elsewhere) one had expected the foreigners to be English, which is what we are really, as I keep reminding the two boys, when we leave our own country. I mean it is we who are the foreigners, not the other way round, whereas in fact most of the others here seem to be Germans and Dutch and Danes and so on. Quite a cosmopolitan gathering, and very different from the old days when the English were the great travellers. Still, it all adds to the fun and has certainly opened the eyes of my two young charges. "As you see, the English are not the only people in the world," I sometimes say to them, to drive the lesson home.

To give them their due, both Geoffrey and William have been keen to make the very most of their continental holiday. "When are we going to spend that Italian money?" they kept on asking me before we had been here a week, and in the

end I agreed that we would make a little expedition through the St. Gotthard tunnel into Italy. Just for the day, of course. I had had this plan in mind all along, as a matter of fact, and had the forethought to bring a few thousand lire with me, a fact of which the boys happened to be aware. But *having* money does not necessarily mean that one must *spend* it, as I felt it my duty to make clear to them. Besides, it does them no harm to be kept on tenterhooks for a while. Discipline is not always so easy to maintain while on holiday as at School; one can hardly set them impositions and so on, in cases of disobedience. But I had only to say quietly "If you do that again I shall not take you to Italy, William," and that was the end of it for half an hour or more. "When you've a treat in store for the little devils," as a wise old colleague once said to me, "keep it up your sleeve as long as ever you can."

I decided that Lugano would make a pleasant jaunt, and we caught the ten-forty-three from Brunnen, arriving at our destination after a thoroughly Alpine run at twenty-three minutes past one. This gave us a good two hours in the place before taking the half-past three train which gets back to Brunnen at six-twenty-five, in good time for dinner. The boys enjoyed the great tunnel, which I confess was a new experience for me too, and eagerly pointed out to each other the Italian names on the further side. The sun seemed to shine with added warmth as we ran down the southern slopes of the mighty range and I think I dozed off for a while. At any rate the time passed quickly, and we were all in high spirits and ready for lunch as we left Lugano station and strolled to the lakeside in search of a suitable place to eat.

"Look, ristorante!" cried Geoffrey. "How super!"

Then William spotted the word "*impermeabile*" in a shop window full of raincoats, Geoffrey capped it with "*pantaloni*," and not to be outdone I silently pointed a finger at the absurd legend "*pizzicagnolo*" which happened to catch my eye. "What's it mean?" William demanded, and I was still considering my reply when Geoffrey suddenly stopped dead in his tracks and said excitedly "I say, Mr. Wentworth. They never stamped us in."

"Stamped us in?" I retorted. "Whatever do you mean, boy?"

"Our passports," he said. "You know. Nobody bonked



"Jenson? Hadley here—I've just received your estimate . . . estimate . . . 'E' for excessive . . . 'S' for steep . . . 'T' for tricky . . . 'I' for inflationary . . ."

them," and he banged a fist down into his open palm to show what he meant.

"Nor they did," William put in. "Gosh, what a swizzle!"

"Well," I said, laughing, "what of it? I dare say as we are only here for a couple of hours—"

"How should they know?" Geoffrey said. "Besides, I want it bonked."

"There's no need to get in a state about it," I said. "And please talk sensibly."

"So do I," William shouted. "I want it to say Italy. There's not much point otherwise."

I was inclined to tell them both not to be silly little fools. If they thought I had brought them all this way simply to have their passports stamped they were no better than babies. But on reflection it did seem a little odd that we had somehow missed the frontier formalities, and of course there was the possibility that when we attempted to re-enter Switzerland there would be a fuss, since we should have nothing to show that we had ever left it or where we had been in the meantime.

"Very well," I told them. "If it is as important as all that we must see what we can do," and I began to retrace my steps, with the idea of inquiring at the railway station. However, we soon spotted a policeman, or *carabiniere* as they say, and to save time I put our little difficulty to him. We had come, I explained, from Switzerland, just for the day, but through some oversight our passports had not been stamped on entry. Would he kindly advise me how to regularize the position?"

"Pass porto?" he said.

"Yes," I replied, speaking very slowly and clearly. "Not stamped. *Sapristi?*"

It was soon clear that he understood little if any English, and having myself no great command of Italian I took my passport from my inside breast pocket and opened it at the page bearing the Swiss entry stamp at Zurich. "See?" I said.

"Sì," he replied.

"Now then," I went on, squaring my shoulders, "here"—and I laid a finger on the entry stamp—"is Switzerland. *Schweiz*. Yes?"

"Sì," he said. "*Svizzera*."

"As you will," I replied. "But here," jabbing my finger on the empty space below, "no stamp! *Marka? Indorsimento?*"

He nodded his head several times, but I have spent too many years as a schoolmaster not to recognize a look of utter incomprehension when I see one and I therefore brought my clenched fist sharply down on the open passport. "*Bonk!*" I said, shaking my head to indicate that it had not been done.

"Try *bonka*," one of the boys advised. "They always put an 'a' on it."

The officer smiled vaguely, looking up and down the road as though for help, and I began again at the beginning. "*Schweiz*," I said pointing. "*Svizzera*. Yes?"

"*Svizzera*," he said. "Sì."

"Good!" I said. "*Buono!* But Italy—*Italia*—no!"

"*Italia*," he agreed, "no!"

"Well then!" I cried in exasperation. But it was useless. The policeman, with a polite "*Scusa!*" took my passport from me, flipped over the pages, studied my entry visa for America for a moment, and handed it back with a bow. "Come!" he said, finally.

We followed him, willy-nilly, for a few hundred yards until

we came to what I surmised, rightly, to be a police station, where to my great satisfaction I very soon found myself talking to an officer who spoke, on the whole, very good English.

"But Mr. Wentworth," he said, raising his eyes from my passport, when I had briefly explained the situation, "Lugano is in Switzerland. There is no need for your passports to be stamped until you cross the frontier."

"Then we are not in Italy?" I cried, unable to believe my ears. God bless my soul! "But everybody speaks—the signs—I always thought the St. Gotthard . . ."

"We also speak German in Switzerland, as you know, and we are not, I am happy—we are not, that is to say, in Germany. We speak French, in the Valais, and we are not in France. Yes?"

"You also speak excellent English," I said warmly, "and you are not—"

"Exactly," he said. "Though that is rather different."

I cannot think, looking back, how I came to make so stupid a mistake. But there it was, and I could only be thankful





that the two boys had remained out of earshot during our conversation. All the same, I was not out of the wood by a long chalk.

"My two young charges will be sadly disappointed," I told the official, after apologizing for so unwarrantably wasting his time. "They had set their hearts, for some reason, on having Italy stamped in their passports."

"So?" he said, smiling. "It is always the same, when we are young. But it is only a few kilometres to the frontier, on the Menaggio road. Would it not be possible—?"

I glanced at my watch. "Unfortunately," I said, "we have to catch a train back to Switzerland—to Brunnen, that is to say—at half-past three. And we have not yet lunched. These formalities, in my experience, take time."

"I see," he said. "Yes. One moment, monsieur." He left me to confer briefly with one of his colleagues, and returned with an expression of the greatest delight. "All is arranged," he said. "Please to follow me."

Well, to cut a long story short, the good-natured fellow took the three of us out to the frontier post and back. In a police car! "Gosh, we're doing eighty!" young William shouted, and so we were, though it was only in kilometres of course. "You are really extremely kind," I said to our friend, but he merely smiled and said "Leave everything to me," which I was only too glad to do. We were stamped out of Switzerland and into Italy in the twinkling of an eye, and as we stepped from the further post on to Italian soil I could not resist the temptation to raise my hat in the air and cry gaily "Well, boys, what do you think of that?"

"Whacko!" they both said. "But it seems funny —"

"Time to be going, if you want any lunch," I told them, and in a minute and a half, all told, with many friendly grins and shouts of "Stay a bit longer next time," we were stamped out of Italy again. "Bonk, bonk, bonk!" as William aptly put it, describing our whirlwind progress. "And one bonk to come," his brother added, as we approached the Swiss frontier post once again.

Here, however, there was an unexpected hitch. Two

customs men sternly demanded whether we had anything to declare—any silks, leather goods, watches, cameras, etc., and before I had time to say a word one of them made a dive for my waistcoat pocket and dragged out my gold half-hunter. "Italian, no?" he said. "You bought her in Milan just now?"

"That watch belonged to my great-grandfather, young man," I replied with some heat, "and what is more—" But I suddenly noticed that everyone was laughing, including our policeman friend, and there was nothing for it but to join in. What a people, eh?

So there it was. The four of us lunched together, at my expense (or rather at my employer, Mr. Bennett's, strictly speaking, though I am sure he would have been the first to authorize the extra expenditure, had he been with us), and a very jolly meal we made of it. "Any time you are passing through Fenport, Hampshire," I said to our good friend when the time came for us to part, "don't fail to look me up"; and he promised that he would, or wouldn't, rather. "I really mean that," I added. And so I did.

"The funny thing is," William said sleepily as our train climbed up towards Airolo, "how when we were in Italy already we had to sort of go out of Switzerland to get into it again. Into Italy, I mean. And then we went out of Italy and into Switzerland, so as far as I can see we ought to be in Switzerland now."

"So we are, William," I said.

"But in that case —"

"Oh, stow it, Bill!" his brother said, and though I do not in the ordinary way allow rudeness to pass unchecked, even between close relations, I left it at that.

*Next Week: A Scotched Rumour*

☆

"Brush up your American: 'Co-ed' is a confusing word. It comes from co-educational, but it is never used of a boy. 'Co-ed' is a girl aged 17 to 21 who goes to college."—*Daily Express*

Well, thanks! Wait a minute, though—what's college?

## Footballer's Wedding by *Lam.*



## And the Next Object

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

THE gardening man in the *Southern Weekly News* has been advising on how to baffle birds, a topic of wide appeal at this time. He recommends "a sequence of strange objects," and somewhat naively suggests a white enamel bowl, followed the next day by an old coat stuck on the handle of a fork. "The third day, get a besom and tie it on the roller. Then, the day after that, use some paper streamers on a bamboo . . . It worries the birds no end, and before they get used to one object, to their very great surprise there's another."

I say naively for two reasons. One, anyone would think this was a new idea; two, if the writer's invention stops short at enamel bowls and besoms he's going to have the feathered kingdom laughing in his face.

My wife and I have used this system for years, ever since we bought a hall-stand at a sale. It wasn't delivered until after dark, and stood on the back lawn all next day. About noon we noticed a marked change in bird behaviour: the clouds of sparrows and finches which only the day before had been sweeping through the seed-beds like flame-throwers were now walking thoughtfully up and down under the

opposite hedge. Sometimes a bolder spirit would throw caution to the winds and make a sortie, but on seeing the hall-stand would leap in the air visibly and return quivering to base. We naturally left the thing where it was, and even talked of getting another for the vegetable garden, where the birds were a good deal thicker on the ground than the peas and lettuce ever looked like being. But the following morning, rushing eagerly to the bedroom window, we saw that its powers had expired. The birds were breakfasting confidently off the polyanthus, and a couple of blue tits and a bullfinch were actually on the hall-stand, fighting over a heap of forsythia buds, the bullfinch gaining useful purchase by bracing a leg on the brass handle of the glove drawer.

Sighing for hopes cast down we brought in the hall-stand and stood it in the hall, and would have thought no more about the affair if my wife hadn't spilt a glass of barley water on the ironing-board and put it out in the sun to dry. The effect was sensational. Not a bird would be on the same lawn with it. They withdrew to the hedges, twittering nervously, keeping their distance until late afternoon, when a

chaffinch which had managed nothing more than a timid "chwink, chwink" all day, suddenly said "chip chip chip tell tell tell cherry-erry-erry tissi cheweeo" and dive-bombed the seed-boxes. All the rest followed as one bird. As a deterrent the ironing-board had had it.

But over its effective period it had afforded complete cover; this, as we soon found, was rare. The two bicycles which we put out the next morning, leaning coily together like park chairs at dusk, only put paid to the tits, which flew next door and didn't get their nerve back for two days. The finches, on the other hand, sat on the bicycles from the beginning, eating what was left of the forsythia and stropping their beaks on the handlebars. We took the bicycles in and substituted a folding camp-bed standing on its side. I was already raiding the attic for stranger and stranger objects, and had a portable gramophone and a hand-operated cine-projector lined up. These were brought into play almost at once, as the camp-bed gave only patchy service; it put the fear of death into nuthatches and magpies, but seemed to be welcomed by sparrows, greenfinches and tits, who flew rapidly in and out of the



mattress mesh on their way to many a hearty meal in the border. After a day, the magpie-nuthatch party also came back, and later showed nothing but amused curiosity in the gramophone and projector, walking round them between courses.

It was about now, just when some sort of firm pattern promised to emerge, that we moved house into the adjoining county, where we lost no time in applying the lessons already learnt. To our astonishment most of them didn't work at all; those that did brought quite different results. The hall-stand, which we had had some difficulty in persuading the removal men to leave amid the soft fruit, proved a clear enticement, particularly to starlings, which squabbled greedily for perches on the hat-pegs but made off at once when we carried out the ironing-board. The tits were the ones that took to the ironing-board, lining up on it in orderly ranks and squirting it all over with raspberry juice. It took an old clothes-wringer draped with hose-pipe to keep the tits off, and even then we had to put out a toboggan on the second day.

I feel, then, that readers of the *Southern Weekly News* should be made

aware of the complexities of this thing. It's all very well for a gardening correspondent to throw off a few half-baked tips about old coats and streamers on bamboo. It isn't as simple as that. It's the combinations and permutations that take their toll of energy and invention. Bird A may be scared off plant B by strange object C—but only in locality X: transfer the operation to locality Y and the whole formula collapses. During our researches over the years we have moved house widely and often. Our notebooks contain such information as the following:

*Thrushes in Kent* don't give a hoot for large, elaborate objects, however strange, being more easily alarmed by small, squat items such as cake-tins. If their quarry is black-currents, however, you can't beat a glass-fronted bookcase.

Gardeners in *Dorset* can probably keep off the average *blackbird* with a set of planks and trestles constantly rearranged, though the *Dorset sparrow* hates nothing more than old oil-drums or little cairns of coke.

*Berkshire* dwellers jealous of their seeds and seedlings may find a scattering of inflated beach-beds effective against *pigeons*.

It's clear that findings of this kind

leave large areas of the problem untouched, and the geographical tests are necessarily narrow. A friend in Cambridgeshire claims to have freed his garden of finches by repeated re-siting of sheds and outhouses. But apart from the irritation of never knowing where the greenhouse is—how would this work in Suffolk?

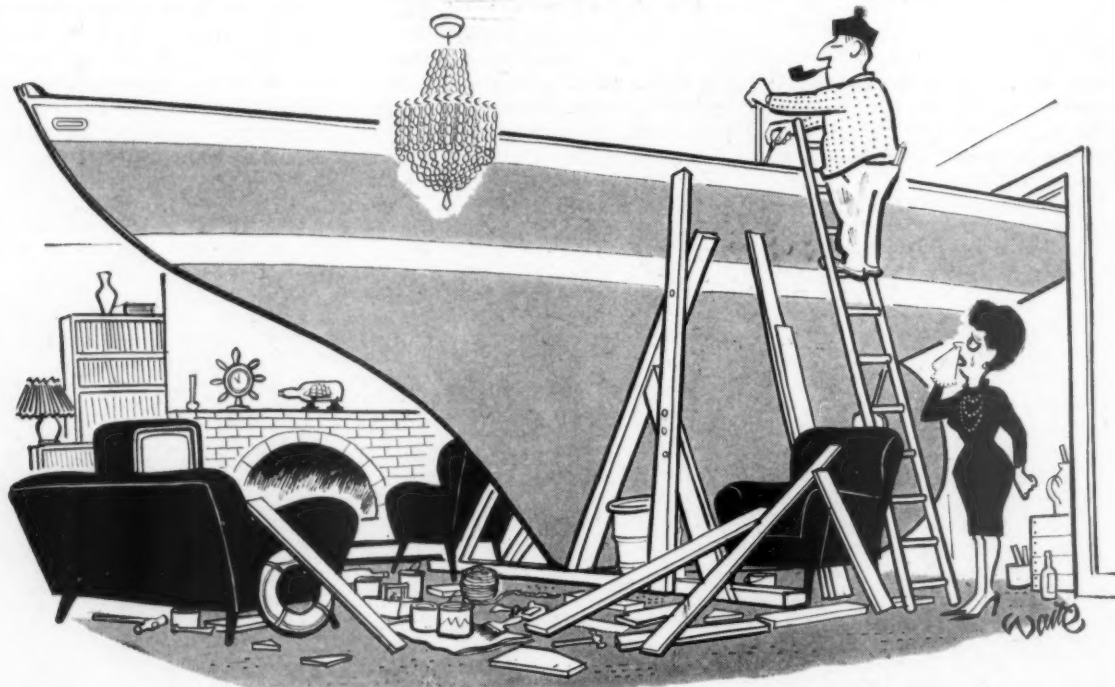
One great difficulty is the heavy drain on strange objects. The stock is bound to run out eventually, and then there is nothing for it but to pack up and go elsewhere. My wife and I are at the moment packing up and going to Warwickshire. We hope it will work. But the birds at our present address have become so devoted to all strange objects in our possession that they may well decide to pack up and come too.

☆

"In the crowds, which began gathering two hours before the royal party arrived, were hundreds of shopgirls and office workers carrying their own flash cameras, grandmothers, and even babies."

*Daily Mail*

It's when they carry other people's grandmothers that it's news.



"Either she goes or I go."





## In the City

### Flying Fishes

ONE by one the shipping companies are taking to the air. The latest to grow wings is the famed Cunard which has acquired control of the Eagle Group of air transport companies. This is true diversification. There will be no immediate overlapping in the transatlantic service, for the Eagle air fleet is not at present equipped to provide cross-Atlantic flights. The time may come when it will do so, and when the Cunard will have both the planes and the licences to compete against—or shall we say to supplement—its own superlative liner service. No longer then will transatlantic liner operators be able to whisper in the ears of delayed air passengers:

"Time to Spare?  
Go By Air."

—a jingle easily learnt by heart if one has just spent 24 or more hours waiting for running repairs or for the fog to clear, in those desolate airports at Gander, Newfoundland or, even worse, Goose Bay, Labrador.

The Cunard people are following good and successful precedents in this new venture. About six years ago the P. & O., through one of its subsidiaries, bought control of Britavia Ltd., which runs the Silver City Airways and Aquila Airways, now owned through British Aviation Services. Any motorist who has tried to book air passage for himself and his car to the Continent anytime in the peak season (and this is a peak with a very wide summit) can testify to the success of this investment.

Incidentally, this is a venture which may well be affected in the years to come by the Channel Tunnel of which we are likely to have some definite news in the near future. The grapevine suggests that the announcement will come appropriately enough while President de Gaulle is here, that the Tunnel will be rail only, but that it will have a car carrying capacity of up to 1,800 per hour. If P. & O. want still more diversification and hedging of their bets, why should they not acquire a modest stake in the equity of the tunnel? Here

is a hint for the new chairman, Sir Donald Anderson.

Another venture in this joint realm of sea and air is that of British and Commonwealth Shipping which comprises the Clan and Union Castle Lines. Nearly seven years ago the Clan Line joined forces with the Hunting Group and formed Hunting-Clan Air Holdings. That interest has this year been considerably enlarged following the merger with Airwork Ltd. This is now the largest independent air transport group in Britain. It is showing some of its competitors that there is much to be gained by the rule of restricting the passengers one carries to those in the air.

Sir Nicholas Cayzer, the chairman of British and Commonwealth, has said that the group's interest in air transport



## In the Country

### Beauty and the Pest

ONE of our most beautiful birds, but all too rarely seen." This description of the bullfinch comes from a bird book for the young, and I have no doubt that when it was written it was perfectly true. But there are now enough bullfinches in Kent to constitute a plague, and no fruit farmer can be expected to appreciate their beauty.

For this plump little bird with the dark-blue head and ruby dicky attacks the buds in winter at the most vulnerable stage of fruit growth. In a matter of minutes a single bullfinch can gobble up the potential source of enough fruit to keep a hundred birds happy for a week. No other wades into the buds with such gusto—yet oddly enough the bullfinch is not an indiscriminate eater. Though a glutton for pear and plum buds, he won't touch cherries or apples.

His amazing increase in numbers may be attributable to a succession of mild winters, but whatever the cause it has certainly made farmers not only curse but blush. Drab pests like rats, rooks, or starlings can be attacked without a twinge of conscience, but I defy anyone to wage war on a finch without feeling a frightful bully. It is not

is no more than "a foot in the door." It is a door which for this and the other shipping companies concerned should lead to wider and more profitable operations.

In relation to total earnings, however, these air ventures are still mere chicken-feed. The real feed, that is the sea food, is gradually improving. The portents are becoming slightly more favourable. There has been a substantial reduction in the tonnage of shipping laid up, and, compared with a year ago, the freight rates for tramp ships are slightly higher. The shipping industry is by no means working up to a boom. But the corner of the depression seems to have been turned—and that is often a good moment at which to acquire or enlarge one's stake in an industry.

— LOMBARD LANE

\* \* \*

surprising that Will wears a furtive, guilty look as he stalks round the orchards with his gun. I think someone has told him that if the number of his victims gets known our fruit will be boycotted, but in any case it is not in his nature to blaze away at little birds and enjoy it.

I suppose it might help if the name were changed. After all, the campaign against grey squirrels made little progress until someone started calling them tree rats, and if bullfinches were renamed ratfinches or budgobblers there might be wider animosity against them. But I doubt it would do much to slacken the assault on our buds, nor would it make the task of bird destruction any less distasteful for those who have to carry it out.

The answer, of course, is not to destroy but to deter. Spray can be effective for a time and no doubt will be further developed, but if someone can invent a cheap, rapidly attachable, peck-proof bud-shield, he would earn the lasting gratitude of the farmers and deserve that of the bullfinches too.

— GREGORY BLAXLAND

☆

"Experienced Tea Maker required by large and expanding group of Estates in Uganda. Applicant with experience in East Africa preferred but this is not vital. Salary and terms dependent on experience. Good prospects for the right man."—Advertisement in Daily Telegraph

Suit ex-office-boy.

## FOR WOMEN



## Pulse of Spring

OF the two earliest created dames, Dame Nature and Dame Fashion, it is Dame Nature who takes precedence; for she was created in the beginning, whereas Dame Fashion was only created at the Fall. Nature has kept ahead ever since: flowers start blooming, birds start building and leaves begin to burst well before the first spring fashions break out on the pavements. Nevertheless, any day now, any mild morning with magic in the air, our hearts will be quickened by the annual miracle of our cities. There will be a sudden glad burgeoning of colour. Spring bonnets, spring suits, and spring dresses will sprout from the very tarmac.

This year it will be the hats which will first catch the eye, because this year's hats are eminently eye-catching: tall-crowned, deep-brimmed cloches; high *cache-chignons* of coarse plaited straw; beehives constructed of layer upon layer of organza; upturned soufflés of frothing net; stratospheric masterpieces created in vaporous tulle. Only the trilbys and bowlers are small, but even they are high-crowned and consequential, moored by a veil tied under the chin.

It is this elevating millinery which will give the fillip to the suit, the flavour to the dress. It will be as the vodka in the tomato juice, for without

the hats this season's fashions would be very temperate . . . there is nothing intoxicating, stimulating, nor extreme. Never has the Dame been less dictatorial. It is as you like it or what you will—as you like it for the length of the skirt, and what you will for the waist. It can be slightly raised as by Nina Ricci, unemphatically low in the Balenciaga manner, or evasively by-passed as at Pierre Cardin. Or, again, you can have a neat little natural as at the house of Dior. The jacket is equally arbitrary: short and dead straight, or belted, or pouched, the only thing barred is a basque; skirts can be sheathlike or full; pleated, flared, or tiered.

With such latitude in all directions last year's clothes can be worn with impunity; but not, of course, with pleasure—unless for sentimental reasons. Moreover, although there is no striking change, there is a difference. It is not so much the look or the line, as the aura. Dame Fashion is capricious, she has her moods. And the mood she is going in for at the moment is a soft and melting mood . . . frail, wispy, flimsy, floating. The illusion is elusive, the fashion wind a zephyr. It is in our sensitivity to this zephyr that we shall reveal ourselves as in or out of fashion.

Thus the silhouette of this new decade is sensed rather than seen. It

has no clear-cut outline, but can be perceived as faintly concave in front, with all movement to the back. Collars fall away from the neck, shoulders are sloping, sleeves set forward and deep. Dior's "Contour Coats" give the concave look by long curving seams, and his "Globe Coats" are rolled out versions of the barrel coats of last winter. At Lanvin-Castillo the coat is a cocoon cape, and at many other *couture* houses there are cape-coats or out-and-out capes—invaluable stage properties of romance. Summer day and cocktail dresses are more often than not quite sleeveless; but there is no sharply defined armhole, the arm emerging from draping folds. By the same token, bodices are often gently pouched, and suits have dressmaker blouses. All fabrics are soft, pliant, weightless. They indicate but scarcely seem to touch the form beneath:

*All that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.*

All this may seem inconsistent in an era of working wives and worldly-wise virgins; but it is an inevitable reaction. Have we not already seen the return of "At Home" clothes, negligees, deshabilles, and tea gowns? True, these are not so much worn for tea and sympathy as gin and gossip; but that is a mere period detail. The rules have changed; the game's the same. Aesthetic ladies of the late nineteenth century, so intense and utterly utter, expressed their intellectual emotions in Liberty fabrics: peacock blues, terracottas, greenery-yallery chiffons; lotus flowers, tulips, poppies, willow leafage. And these same Liberty prints from the original blocks have reappeared this season in the collections of Paris and London. In Rome the Sorella Fontana were so transported by them that they designed a complete "Lotus Collection" within their main collection. Never before have British prints had such success abroad, and it must be attributed largely to timing—sophisticated society is ripe for an aesthetic renaissance.

The coming cult is evident in jewellery that is more chunky, less glittery, with a strong tendency to medallions, chains, and ropes of amber. Necklaces knot instead of clasping, and drop-earrings significantly reappear. All sorts of things *trail*; and leather belts have become soft kid sashes with fringed

## Portents

HE comes in quietly, wipes his muddy feet,  
Hangs all his things up, sweeps away his crumbs,  
And asks if I need help. You think he's sweet.  
I know the signs. I'll have to do his sums.

— T. R. JOHNSON

ends hanging down to the skirt hem. The fashionable face is pale, the eyes deep-set and lustrous with heavy drop-curtain lids, deeply fringed with mascara. The lips are a strange burnt sienna, the nails enamelled umber. The expression is lethargic, the stance drooping. Backbone bones are out.

British women, of course, will briskly opt out of all this; it simply isn't us.

## That's Right, Enjoy Yourself—

**T**WENTY to midnight. "Why not?" he whispered hoarsely in my ear. "It can't be wrong."

Lord, I thought, I'm freezing here. I longed for the kitchen at home, warm and shining. My supper tray would be laid on the table, cocoa and hot muffins. Not very digestible for a pre-bed snack but mouth-wateringly tempting to me now. The digestion of a twenty-year-old needs no stimulation anyway, just fuel shovelled in at regular and frequent times.

"Oh, come on," he urged.

There would be a note on the table, too, telling me to take the dog for a run before I went to bed. A quick canter, whooping (to the annoyance of neighbours) down the road, hurling a ball for the hound, would work wonders for my circulation. My feet, I thought, will drop off at the ankles when he loosens that stranglehold on me and I try to walk away. I almost giggled at the thought of going home with my feet tucked under my arms.

"Please be kind," he pleaded.

I'll never get up in the morning, I thought. There'll be *those* faces at breakfast to-morrow. Dad saying, "When I was your age . . ." Mother not saying anything but keeping a noisy silence, rattling the pans hard, and Jane, my elder sister who doesn't dance and goes to bed regularly at ten, looking self-righteous and smug.

"Don't you love me?" he whined.

How the hell can I, I thought. You keep me out with all but a half-nelson on me till my lips turn blue and my teeth are worn to mere stumps by chattering. I'll not be able to eat properly, I thought frantically, unless I go to a dentist, get the stumps pulled

Æstheticism will pass us by, and the aura leave us cold. Enough for most of us that it is possible to wear last year's suits, last year's coats and last year's dresses, shoes, and gloves without looking conspicuously out of date. What a comfort, what an economy, and what a bore! Fortunately it is absolutely essential to buy at least a dozen hats.

— ALISON ADBURGHAM

out and false teeth put in. No, that's not right; they don't put false teeth in, they measure you for them and leave you to put them in. Easy to clean, though. You just stand them in water overnight by your bedside and you've got a drink beside you, too, if you get thirsty during the night.

"Please!"

Him again. The water in the kettle would be frozen now. If I put it on to re-heat before I took the dog, it should be ready when I got back home. I could make a hot water bottle, too, to take to bed; that is, if I was still able to move when he let me go. I can see it now, I thought. He'll leave go of me and, stiff as a guardsman passing out

on the parade ground, I'll topple over, frozen like an iceberg. No, that's not right. I'd be two-thirds underground if that were so. Bitterly I thought, if this keeps up much longer I'll be completely underground with a headstone with angels on above me saying; SHE DIED FOR LOVE. Is that this, I wondered. How do people know?

"Why do you hold yourself back?"

From what; crowning you with my dancing shoes? I can't be downright rude to him though; it would be impolite, besides, he's my first date this week, and Marie and Louise were both dated on Monday too. Mind, they'll take any date in pants. But if I'm short with people I'll end up an old maid, tatting, keeping cats, in bed at nine with a hot water bottle. *Hot water bottle.* I'd give a lot for one right now.

"Is that you, Teresa?"

My sister, resplendent in a jumper and tweed skirt over her night-clothes (I could see one rolled-up pyjama leg peeping coyly under her hemline) came into view.

"Mother wondered what on earth had happened to you. It's almost two. Hello! Who's this?" Short-sightedly she peered in the dark at the embarrassed young man.

"This is . . . sorry, what did you say your name was?"

— TERESA BALDWINSON





# Toby Competitions

## No. 107—Push-Button Prestige

**C**OMPETITORS are asked to write an advertisement for a useless but impressive gadget with which the go-ahead firm can equip its managing director. Limit: 120 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, April 8, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 107, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

## Result of Competition No. 104

(*Little Encyclopædia*)

Competitors were asked to provide a fictional entry from an encyclopædia of Architecture, Art or Music. It is an ominous sign of the way our civilization and cultural activities are going that motor-cars bulked large in all three categories. Omens apart, it was an enjoyable competition to judge. The winner is:

J. C. BLANCHARD  
9 NORTHAMPTON ROAD  
CROYDON  
SURREY

**ROOTS GROUP (THE).** A school of Architecture whose fundamental tenet is that the motor-car is the basic unit of planning. The movement originated in the United States with Botfish and his Drive-in Cemeteries, and was introduced to England by Bapchild, whose epigram

"The automobile is a machine for living in" has been so often misquoted. The work of this school is best exemplified by the Brownsons' design for two-storey accommodation in Soho for a single family car. However, the full imaginative scope and depth of feeling of this project are not easily appreciated since, owing to lack of funds, the scheme was never completed.

The following are runners-up:

**THE "DISARMAMENT" SYMPHONY** in H major. First performed Geneva, 1960. Composer unknown. Score bears quotation "East is East and West is West and never the twain..." In 4 mvts: 1. The "ultimate deterrent" mvt. in modified sonata form ends with a chain reaction of tremendous bangs delivered by full orchestra.

2. The "fall-out" mvt. This, which may be classed as the slow mvt., consists of 20 bars of absolute silence, *sempre lugubre*.

3. The scherzo. "The gathering of the ministers." Busy and hustling, but critics agree it gets nowhere.

4. "Finale senza finale." For large cacophonous orchestra, representing discussion and wordless chorus wailing *dolente*. Players gradually stop playing until conductor is left frantically beating the air, and tearing his hair.

James S. Fidgein, 33 Perrycroft Avenue, Bristol 3

**HEFFER, Heinrich.** British Composer, 1940.—Founder of "Naturist" School. His orchestra employs only open notes from strings, open apertures of woodwind and the hypersonorous fundamentals from the

brass, adding the conventional implements of *musique concrète* and the recorded sounds of Nature. Characteristics: Neo-contrapuntal clot-patterns of ambivalent tonality in asymmetrical saltatory rhythms. Studied R.C.M. 1959-60 under Bullock. Trio for Cow and Two Horns, Hereford Festival 1960. Opera *The Raspberry Gatherers*, Covent Garden 1961. Waltz *Isis*, for Glockenspiel and chorus of Seagulls, commissioned by Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra 1962.

*The Rev. V. F. Homiball, Little Baddow Rectory, Chelmsford, Essex*

**BILLSEN, Bo-Erik** (Variously Bilssen, Bilsen, Billsen, etc.) (1867-1906). Norwegian composer. His musical gifts early became apparent and he was given his first piano lessons by his step-mother. After seven years in Germany with Raff he returned home on the latter's death in 1882, to emerge as a vigorous apostle of nationalism. His works include many songs and piano pieces; Danish, Finnish and Swedish Rhapsodies for orchestra; and 132 operas, of which the first, *Everard the Ever-ready*, was the only one to achieve any success. He is chiefly known to-day for the Siberian Dances from this opera, in Henry Wood's brilliant reorchestration. Bibliography: Maureen P. Heskestad, *The Enigma of Billssen* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis for the University of Minneapolis).

*John Caldwell, 52 Church Road, Bebington, Wirral, Cheshire*

**BLEACHISM.** During the 1950s a group of water-colourists became known as The Bleachers because of their bubbling enthusiasm for the white luminosity of washes, produced by process white plus a special blue, called the "active blue ingredient." Their aim was to exploit the whiteness of white and bring out the brilliance of colour. Considerable rivalry existed between members of the group who vied one with another to produce the whitest wash of all. Purcell is believed to have founded the movement, and his child-study, entitled "Somebody's mother isn't using it," is world-famous. It was sold to America for £30,000 (3d. off) in 1952 and is now in the White House, Washington. Contemporaries were Dazzlo, Homo, Ocksidoll, Thyde and Serffe (q.v.) and shining examples of their work are to be found on the line of the Tubb Gallery.

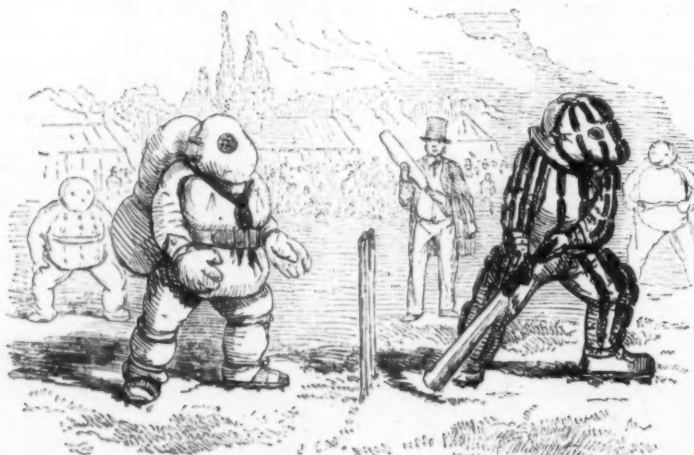
*G. E. Harvey, 19 Franklyn Avenue, Crewe, Cheshire*

**MOTET.** A very fine vehicle indeed, useful when touring the ecclesiastical areas of Europe. Moving very smoothly, it soothes the nerves of the jaded traveller. Its designers have usually employed a four- or five-part gear system, but exceptional models may have up to eight parts in their transmission. In the older types, owing to faulty synchronization, unpleasant noise was often created by the "Motetus" and "Triplex" which could be heard above the murmur of the Motet itself. At least 180 reliable types have been marketed by the house of Palestrina. Admirable models—elements of which have been copied by later designers—have also been produced by Byrd, Weelkes & Co.

*John T. Bains, 78 Queens Road, Old Fletton, Peterborough, Northants*

## THEN AS NOW

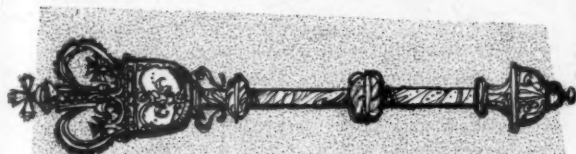
In 1854 round-arm bowling had been legal for ten years, and ten more were to pass before the bowler's arm was allowed to rise above shoulder level.



NEW CRICKETING DRESSES, TO PROTECT ALL ENGLAND AGAINST THE PRESENT SWIFT BOWLING

August 12 1854

## Essence



## of Parliament

**W**HAT fun it must have been to have been taught at school by Doctor King. The wonder is not that one of his pupils made the Crowther Committee but that anyone who had not the advantage of being educated by him **The Chief** was ever able to compete with any of his **Defect of** pupils. For he moves with easy erudition **Horace King** from Rabelais to Milton and back again in a way that is a wonder in the House of Commons and must have been a refreshment in the class room. He gives the impression of being probably the best read and certainly the most profitably read Member of the House. So I could not but imagine that my ears had deceived me when I thought that I heard him ascribe to Macbeth Hecate's opinion that

### Security

*Is mortal's chiefest enemy . . .*

—in itself surely no proper opinion for a Socialist M.P. It was Macbeth who discovered that truth by bitter experience—he did not enunciate it. Are the Conservatives going to discover the truth again? For years critics have been girding at the rigidity of the party system but confessing themselves unable to see how it could be broken. Now it has, for the time at any rate, come to an end. It has come to an end through the disintegration of the Opposition, and suave Mr. Redmayne, far from discouraging revolt, is almost begging his back-benchers to make a bit of a fuss in order to give us some fun. "If you can't revolt, then stay away," seems to be almost the order of the day, and Mr. Nabarro and Lord Hinchinbrooke find it almost an insult that they should be treated as an entertainment rather than as a menace, while Mr. Butler blandly agrees that there is a good deal in their criticisms of the Government.

Rumour has it that a deal was done between the front bench and the back by which the back-benchers could abuse the Government as much as they liked provided that they did not **The Barber** vote against it at the end. (The question was **and** the perennial question of lending powers to **the Butler** the Steel Board.) If so, Mr. Nabarro certainly took full advantage of that deal at the expense of poor Mr. Barber, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury. Mr. Butler defended the Government with the argument that they were only doing to the nationalized industries what the Socialists had done ten years before. This was not much of an argument in itself, since ten years ago the Conservatives were in full hue and cry against the Socialist policies, and it was an argument especially calculated to infuriate Mr. Nabarro, who makes no bones about it that it is he rather than the Socialists who ought to be treated as the official Opposition. It was a "perfectly disgraceful remark," he shouted, his moustaches bristling as if

he were an angry cat, and he added for good measure, throwing all pretence at finesse to the winds, "the sooner the Prime Minister kicks you out of office the better." The Butler, in the best tradition of Happy Families, had to intervene to rescue the Barber, and the Socialists thought to embarrass—and in a measure did embarrass—the Nabarro boys by forcing a division in order to have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Nabarro not voting for his own amendment. The vote against the Government was 0 and the House adjourned at 2.50 a.m.

The most interesting speech on the Crowther Report in the Commons came from Mr. Charles Curran. Mr. Curran, to adapt the famous description of Goldsmith, looks a little bit **Crowther** like a prizefighter but talks like an apostle **and** of gentle reason. Education is a subject that **All That** lends itself to a good deal of bla-bla, and there was plenty of that in the House on Monday, but Mr. Curran bluntly defended keeping children at school because, as teenagers in these days, they earned much too much money when they left. It was perhaps a somewhat roundabout reason for education. It reminded me a little of one of my favourite modern characters—a Fijian chief—who on his first visit to New York was horrified to discover that the boys and girls of that benighted city were from the age of six to sixteen incarcerated in institutions known as "schools." He said "Why, that is just the time in life when they ought to be learning something." So at Westminster in this, as in many other educational debates, there was a great deal about how important it was to stay at school, to have an adequate number of teachers, to have smaller classes, but there was very little about what should be learnt there.

The Lords were perhaps a bit more at home with Crowther than the Commons. Lord Escher, speaking for the dunces, made an amusing speech, although he did not mention Crowther, and Lord Hailsham, who is going from strength to strength these days, made clearer than Sir David Eccles the reason for the Government's refusal to fix a date for raising the school age. Lord James of Rusholme, a Crowther boy himself, spoke competently from the horse's mouth and denounced too early specialization. Lord Pakenham thought that the Crowther Report was "woozy." I am not quite sure what that means, but it is clearly something not so very nice. But let us face it—the Earl of Lucan and Lord Silkin, the Socialist front bench speakers, are dull dogs, and, while they spoke, Earl Attlee slept by their side. "Sleep also is a form of criticism."

Out of Africa it is, alas, all too true that there is these days always something new, and the week has not been a happy one for Mr. Alport. They ragged him a good deal about Nyasaland

**Ex Africa** on Wednesday, but that was nothing to the **Semper Aliquid** feeling about South Africa on Tuesday. **Novi** Mr. Alport thought that silence was the best answer. A more experienced politician might have cooked up some answer that said nothing while it seemed to say something, but Mr. Alport was perhaps wise to keep silent. It might have been better had the Prime Minister, who was sitting next to him, taken on the answering. As it was he contented himself with stroking Mr. Alport as if he were a horse.

—PERCY SOMERSET

☆

### Mushroom Reputation

"Britain should give up its own Mr. Jo Grimond, M.P., the private nuclear deterrent, said Liberal leader, at Wigston, Leicestershire, to-day . . ."

Evening Herald (Dublin)



## BOOKING OFFICE

Variation on a Theme  
by Homer

*The Anger of Achilles.* Homer's *Iliad* translated by Robert Graves. Cassell, 30/-

THE truth about *The Iliad* is that it is both marvellous and a bit of a bore. Suitably cut, and with additions fore and aft, it is (like *Gulliver's Travels*) a splendid tale for children. My eight-year-old son has been reading and enormously enjoying Roger Lancelyn Green's *The Tale of Troy*. But on an adult level what do we really get from it? Mr. Rieu, in his introduction to the Penguin edition which has sold I don't know how many hundred thousand copies, says that *The Iliad* is a tragedy, and talks about Homer's powers of characterization. But really, isn't *The Iliad* a history, even though an imaginary one? And isn't Homer's characterization of that repetitive bardic kind which, having once shown us a character's salient feature, emphasizes this feature continually—so

that Nestor, once established as a Polonian bore who drones on about his past achievements, must do this in every speech? This sort of repetition was an excellent comic device for bards who were telling the story. It is less good for us who are reading it.

I am delighted to find so many of my own ideas about *The Iliad* shared by Mr. Graves. What he calls "the bardic entertainment motive" is at the centre of his translation, which is designed to remove "the classroom curse" from the narrative. We are of course reading, and not listening to a spellbinding bard, but with that inevitable limitation it is hard to see how the story could have been made more powerful and effective. There are still skippable bits—the "Catalogue of Ships," for instance—but formality has been trimmed with quite remarkably good effect. Poetry is retained for important occasions, like Thetis's lament for Achilles. The rest is prose, and what lively and flexible prose it is can be seen by comparing Mr. Graves's translation with Mr. Rieu's, or better still with that

of Lang, Leaf and Myers. A short but typical passage will show what I mean. Hephaestus, the crippled artificer god, cur's short Thetis's plea that he should make Achilles's new armour:

"Enough, enough!" replied Hephaestus. "I shall be delighted to oblige you . . . What a pity I cannot snatch Achilles from his doom and hide him somewhere safe!" (Graves)

"Distress yourself no more," replied the illustrious lame god. "You can leave everything to me. In fact I only wish it were as easy for me to save him from the pains of death when his hour of doom arrives." (Rieu)

Then made answer unto her the lame god of great renown: "Be of good courage, let not these things trouble thy heart. Would that so might I avail to hide him far from dolorous death, when dread fate cometh upon him." (Myers)

The greatest virtue of *The Anger of Achilles*, then, is that it can be read with almost constant pleasure. The translation has other original features. Mr. Graves stresses, even perhaps a thought overstresses, the ironic element, in such passages as Agamemnon's defeatism in Book II, and in his comments on Nestor's forgetfulness about the arrow lodged in Machaon's shoulder. Nor is it easy to accept his view that Achilles is "the villain of the piece." The fact is, surely, that *The Iliad* is both heroic and satirical, and that the heroic element is predominant, not only on the surface. Achilles behaved very badly, but he is still a hero. Yet these are trifles beside Mr. Graves's triumphant achievement in producing a translation that is modern without being jarringly colloquial, and that is in itself a work of art.

—JULIAN SYMONS

## NEW FICTION

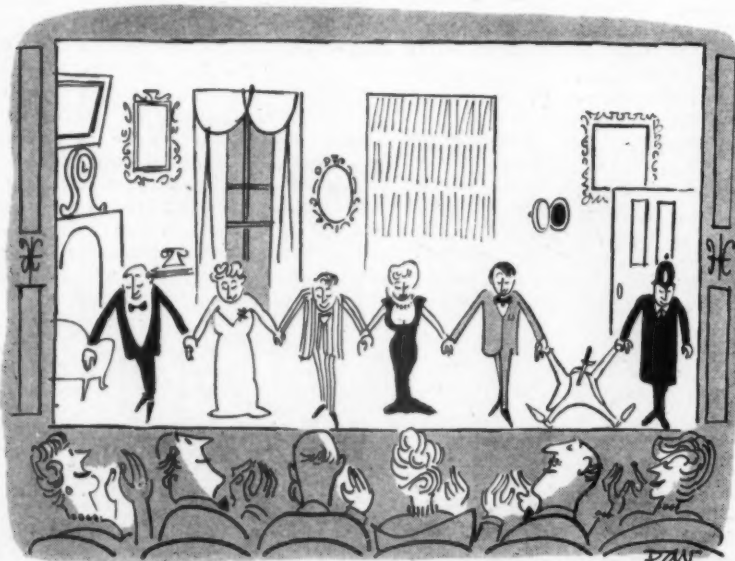
*Private Fires.* Kathleen Nott. Heinemann, 18/-

*If It Be Love.* Stanley Kauffmann. Michael Joseph, 15/-

*The Little Disturbances of Man.* Grace Paley. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 13/6

*Enough Romance.* Gerda Rhoads. Anthony Blond, 15/-

There is in the English novel a way of writing that leaves critics gasping and





readers impressed but uncertain; it is the way of rhetoric. Wyndham Lewis did it; *Finnegans Wake* took it to an extreme. Miss Kathleen Nott has done it in *Private Fires*, which is one of the strangest books I have read in a long time. It starts off in the manner of a rumbunctious working-class novel, set in a London still ruined by the blitz, and with a gallery of characters likewise torn by the post-war world. But as we read on, realism turns to surrealism; we begin to perceive that the novel is a parable about authority and about the ruins of the human spirit. Mrs. Hand, a termagant landlady, full of the life-must-go-on-spirit and well-rooted in the working-class tradition, is defiant of false authority; the Duke, a rootless exploiter, an underground man, rejects all authority except his own in his nihilism. The Rent Tribunals and Health Departments which threaten Mrs. Hand are staffed with ineffectual Lib-Labs, full of misdirected goodwill. The ruins of the war dominate the scene and the parable of the novel seems to point, rather uncertainly, to the menace in our midst of those who, philosophically, seek to perpetuate this destruction. We do have then plain enough hints that something substantial is going on in *Private Fires*. Even so, there is no doubt that the story on its narrative level simply doesn't have enough substance to fill out the rhetoric with which it is told.

If *It Be Love* also has problems in rhetoric. There is no doubt that Mr. Kauffman is a good and a serious novelist, concerned (for all the publicity over *The Philanderer*) with moral themes. The present novel contains the classical confrontation—American innocence face to face with European experience. The solution is by no means cut and dried; the American hero learns that his bright moral stance has to be built on something more solid than at first he can provide. America stands for goodhearted but impracticable moral brightness, Italy for the tarnished morality of a society that has known too much suffering, and England provides the fulcrum, a *modus vivendi*. The American hero believes that in every human situation right and wrong is to be discovered; at the end of the book he finds himself, through experience, equipped to determine, albeit pragmatically, where it lies. Certainly this is a good novel, but once again the rhetoric makes one uneasy—in this case it is as if Mr. Kauffman has to watch every word to prevent his romanticism running away with him; he keeps catching himself just in time.

*The Little Disturbances of Man* is a collection of very good short stories by an American-Jewish writer, Grace Paley. The little disturbances of man are self-invoked, in contrast to the sufferings imposed by God. They are stories about the battle between the sexes, between polygamous men and monogamous women, women whose destiny is to be "laughingly the servant of man." Their role is like that of the Jews, whose only hope is to be "a splinter in the toe of civilizations, a victim to aggravate

the conscience." These themes are worked out in splendid style, with great warmth, feeling and humour. Miss Paley is full of craftsmanship as well as understanding, and I recommend the volume.

*Enough Romance* is something more than the romantic novelette which its title and its presentation suggest. It is about the "international, unofficial nation" of expatriates, persons who choose to live anywhere but in their native land, where they feel alienated. The sensitive heroine goes to live in one such expatriate colony, Bejos on the Costa Brava, and gradually becomes involved with the amoral, decadent life of the "set." She finds herself in an unresolvable quandary; is she destroying herself in losing her own values and her old common sense, or is she finding a new freedom to exercise herself more fully? The novel could almost have been written by Sagan, except that Sagan would have polished up the construction, which is weak.

—MALCOLM BRADBURY

## HERO AND KING

**King David.** Geoffrey de C. Parmiter. Arthur Barker, 25/-

All the strands of a fairy tale are woven into the story of the youngest son of Jesse, who was shepherd boy and anointed king, who married a king's daughter, who was giant-killer and Robin Hood, established an empire, and sang songs which, in so far as they are his own, have been more often repeated than those of any other poet in the Western World.

But the strangest thing of all is that the story seems to have been written by an eye-witness (and a candid eye-witness) something like three thousand years ago. It is retold by Mr. Geoffrey de C. Parmiter with great skill and clarity in the language of modern biography and history, and with the assistance of modern archaeological research. He claims no original scholarship, but frequently compares the Septuagint with the Massoretic text where the meaning of a passage seems obscure, and uses in the main his own translation, when citing from the Hebrew. He reminds the reader that the rulership of the Israelite tribes, ruder in culture though tougher than the Canaanites whom they invaded, was hierarchical and democratic in origin. The monarchy was a necessity of wartime and territorial government, but the prophets insisted, so far as they could, on the predominance of the Ark of the Covenant which had brought the people through their nomad career.

Therein lay the glory and greatness of David. He followed the guidance of Yahweh, as Saul did not, and repented when he sinned. Sin he most surely did in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba, though the writer suggests that few oriental kings would have felt any concern about such a transgression. Possibly. But it was not unlike the sin which in a far more moral atmosphere destroyed the ascendancy of Jezebel, and seeing that it broke four of the Ten Commandments, undoubtedly deserved a reprimand.

—E. V. KNOX



## OTHER NEW BOOKS

**The Waist-High Culture.** Thomas Griffith. Hutchinson, 21/-

Something must be seriously wrong with American society, to judge from the mass of self-criticism that is emerging from it. Mr. Griffith's theme is that in America to-day the prime motive in too many spheres is the conferring of easy euphoria as widely as possible, with the consequent all-round lowering of standards. Where it is so easy to please everyone, he argues, there is no longer any incentive to strive for perfection. He argues his case knowledgeably and persuasively, prefacing it with an account of his own life—from crime-reporter on the *Seattle Times* to Foreign News Editor on *Time*—that gives the reader just the information he needs about his background and standpoint. The book is at once stimulating and sympathetic; and the lessons to be learned from it are by no means only applicable in the United States. Wherever an I'm-all-right-Jack society is growing up there is danger of a waist-high culture growing up alongside.

—B. A. Y.

**The Doge of Dover: Portraits and Essays.** John Raymond. Macgibbon & Kee, 18/-

It is clearly time for Mr. John Raymond to write a biography. The longest of these essays deals with Rosebery; its whole style and tone suggest the need for extending the writer's scope by committing himself to a much larger canvas. The title of the collection is that given to the piece about Sir Winston Churchill. Others consider Lord Salisbury (the Victorian Prime Minister), Jowett, Mark Pattison,

Montaigne, Swift, Renan, Jane Austen, etc., with some contemporary novelists, who include Miss Pamela Hansford Johnson, Mr. Angus Wilson, and Miss Iris Murdoch. Mr. Raymond is a critic of liveliness, discernment, and of somewhat schizophrenic temperament. On the one hand, he feels nostalgia for a richly furnished Past, on the other, impatience with the drab Present. These two emotions for some reason never quite fuse together as they do in, say, Mr. Evelyn Waugh. However, perhaps this undercurrent of inconsistency—if it is inconsistency—makes the essays at once unusual, witty and at moments disturbing.

—A. P.

## CREDIT BALANCE

**Jameson's Raid.** Elizabeth Pakenham. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 36/-. A really admirable account of this sinister affair, which looks forward so prophetically to settler-behaviour in some parts of Africa to-day: complete and scholarly, yet readable and exciting.

**Bargains at Special Prices.** Alan Clark. *New Authors*, 15/-. A gay, semi-farcical romp in the dingier fringes of the Stock Exchange. Nice authentic background, intermittently hilarious situations. Just the thing for a weekend at Sunningdale.

**The Future of Man.** P. W. Medawar. *Methuen*, 10/6. Last year's Reith lectures. Fascinating, if not quite what the title says. Mainly about the techniques and difficulties of anthropological prophecy, rather than what we are actually in for.

## AT THE PLAY

*Flower Drum Song* (PALACE)  
*Look On Tempests* (COMEDY)  
*Go Back For Murder* (DUCHESS)

I DID not thoroughly enjoy *Flower Drum Song*, and I believe that if it is successful here it will be because it is made of a number of agreeable things uncertainly strung together, rather than because it is an almost perfect work of art like *Oklahoma!* The latter it most certainly is not: taken as a whole it is naïve and clumsy and trite. The plot (who's going to marry whom, if at all?) is as sweet and tiny as the framework of many a musical comedy of the 'thirties, and less complicated: and it is resolved, a few minutes before the entire company comes down to the footlights for a final chorus, by one of the most brazenly casual *coups de théâtre* I have ever experienced. Still, before this moment arrives, breath-taking in its stark tameness, we have had some things to admire. There is a truly captivating performance by Yau Shan Tung as the unsophisticated heroine. There are passages of neat choreography realized with wit and excitement by the slant-eyed dancers. Richard Rodgers' music (stamped with Rodgers hallmarks but not quite the real sterling stuff) is splendidly enhanced—sometimes saved—by the orchestrations of Robert Russell Bennett. The costumes and one or two of the settings crisply and beautifully suggest the atmosphere of the

San Francisco Chinese quarter in which the action passes. Yama Saki is full of bounce as a kind of jolly Oriental good-time girl. Tim Herbert and Kevin Scott partner the leading ladies with great verve, Mr. Herbert being particularly successful in the song called "Don't Marry Me."

But all this is not enough, because somehow it doesn't hang together to make an artistic whole. There are also some of those simple-minded jokes about how quaint the Chinese are, lyrics here and there that

## REP. SELECTION

Dundee Rep., *Caught Napping*, until April 2nd.  
Oldham Rep., *Flowering Cherry*, until April 2nd.  
Colchester Rep., *The Apple Cart*, until April 2nd.  
Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, *The Magistrate*, until April 2nd.

don't come off, and a few odd bits and pieces of plot or characterization (presumably not fully assimilated from the novel on which the musical is based) left lying intriguingly about.

I would like you to understand, however, that I would enjoy parts of this show again, perhaps as items in a revue—notably Yau Shan Tung singing "I Am Going To Like It Here," the work of the Ensemble in "Chop Suey," and the whole of the musical number "Sunday," except the words.

The bricks Joan Henry has used in the construction of *Look On Tempests* are substantial enough (a man on trial for homosexual activities, and his wife and his mother facing in their different ways the fact that he is probably guilty); but the building she has raised with them strikes me as strangely flimsy. There is matter here for Greek tragedy, and it has been frittered away in one of those woolly little dramas in which the characters are constantly being confronted with a choice between tea and coffee, whisky and dry martini, and things that are better left unsaid are left unsaid, but pregnant. The situation is quickly made clear to us, but is hardly allowed to develop in any direction until a few minutes before the final curtain, when mother and wife reach the sort of understanding we might have expected them to reach all along, if we'd really cared. Part of the trouble may lie in the old theatrical hazard that is apt to arise when the central character is kept offstage throughout the play—but even without his presence, given a situation of such solid dramatic promise we were entitled to hope that its surface might be more than scratched, and it isn't.

Nothing daunted, Gladys Cooper brings considerable histrionic gusto to bear in her playing of the mother. This upper-class mum figure—now frostily autocratic, now fragile and bewildered in a world she cannot understand, bless her—has long been a traditional figure on our stage, and is by no means yet an anachronism. Miss Cooper



Linda Low—YAMA SAKI

[*Flower Drum Song*  
Sammy Fong—TIM HERBERT

can bring her to life most successfully, although once or twice in this play, when her material is thin or her climaxes cloudy, she may seem to be trying too hard. Vanessa Redgrave tackles the wife very thoughtfully indeed. This is a most promising performance, with passages of silence towards the end which are strikingly effective. Brewster Mason, as the defending counsel, made the most of his one scene, which promised well and ended tamely; and Ian Hunter was perfectly the decent, understanding chap doing his best for all concerned.

During the interval whodunit fanciers with long memories will have no difficulty in telling their neighbours exactly who killed Amyas Crale in Agatha Christie's *Go Back for Murder*, because in the very first scene they will recognize it as one of her early books adapted for the theatre. Those who have never encountered the yarn before may be interested to find the identity of the criminal at the end of the evening. They may even be mildly surprised. But they will not have been brought to such a peak of excitement that they spend the last ten minutes in a pleasurable agony of suspense, for Mrs. Christie has chosen to present her puzzle in a series of fits and starts and flashbacks and repeats which add up simply to a muddle. She has also given the amateur detective in the audience absolutely no chance of arriving at a solution except by guesswork: the vital clues are arbitrarily introduced just before the denouement, and that, far from being ingenious, is unforgivable. The cast, notably Ann Firbank, Robert Urquhart, Anthony Marlowe and Laurence Hardy, do some wonders with material that is too often laughable. Hubert Gregg, the director, has coped manfully with the difficulties presented by unwieldy construction. But I can't believe even the most rabid Christie fan will regard the play as being really worth the hard work and trouble.

#### Recommended

(Date in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

*The Wrong Side of the Park* (Cambridge—10/2/60), Margaret Leighton triumphs in interesting new play. *One Way Pendulum* (Criterion—6/1/60), N. F. Simpson's hilarious piece of solemn lunacy. *Inherit The Wind* (St. Martin's—23/3/60), Andrew Cruickshank memorable in a moving semi-documentary.

—ALEX ATKINSON

#### AT THE PICTURES

##### Can-Can

*Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*  
*Lift to the Scaffold*

WHAT is described as "Cole Porter's" *Can-Can* (Director: Walter Lang) is really something based—screenplay by Dorothy Kingsley and Charles Lederer—on a stage musical comedy by Abe Burrows. Admittedly, Cole Porter wrote the songs, and it's pleasant



Roo—ERNEST BORGNINE

[*Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*  
Olive—ANNE BAXTER

for once to hear pop songs that have some comic ingenuity in the words as well as a tune (though we knew one or two of them already); but the songs are very far from being the main point here. The strength of this one comes from its enormous vitality, its impressively clever direction of huge moving group scenes (moving to music), its kaleidoscopic visual effects, its funny lines, and—above all—the performance of that fantastically brilliant charmer, Shirley MacLaine.

This is a really incredible girl, quite unique in combining superlative song-and-dance ability and electric vitality with straightforward acting skill, personal charm and attractiveness, and gifts as a comedienne—not to say clown—that alone would have been enough to take her to the top.

The whole thing is in the *Gigi* country (and period), but I liked it much more, perhaps because I'm temperamentally inclined to prefer comic liveliness and disrespectfully satirical invention to conscious "charm" and wistful prettiness. For my taste, *Gigi*, though beautifully done, was too flossy and oo-la-la; this burlesques the qualities suggested by those dubious adjectives. I was entertained even by the absurd contrived story, which has Frank Sinatra as a philandering lawyer who loves Simone (Miss MacLaine), who runs a café where the illegal Can-Can is danced nightly, sometimes in the presence of an affable judge (Maurice Chevalier) who has to preside over the court at which she appears when arrested for it. Louis Jourdan is another judge who . . . but why try to summarize the nonsense? It's simply an excuse for comedy, singing and dancing, and cleverly-designed, brightly-

coloured spectacle, and it is all magnificently entertaining. Todd-AO does the thing proud, but I still believe that Shirley MacLaine is its most important ingredient.

I enjoyed *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (Director: Leslie Norman). The original play by Ray Lawler I don't know, but John Dighton's screenplay gives no impression of theatricality and the whole thing is very effective as a film: funny, touching and full of character. This is one that appeals on two levels: the unthinking can take it as a plain happy-ending comedy full of the sort of lines and situations at which they screech in any Cockney farce, but the more grown-up can recognize with pleasure that however funny the lines are they are still justified by character and placing in the story, and that the story itself has something of universal application to say about humanity and the passage of time. Australians perhaps will quarrel with some of the accents, but the character playing is the main thing here. For sixteen years the Queensland cane-cutters Roo (Ernest Borgnine) and Barney (John Mills) have been spending their five months' "lay-off" in Sydney with the same two girls, Roo's habit being to leave a souvenir doll every time; this is the story of the seventeenth year, when they find everything changed. Barney's girl has got married, and Roo gradually learns, the hard way, that he is not the man he was. On the surface the piece is almost continuously amusing, and there is some brilliant direction of scenes both small (three-cornered arguments) and large (crowds at Luna Park). Anne Baxter seemed to me quite admirable as Roo's girl, and John





[What the Papers Say

BRIAN INGLIS

Mills as the earnest Barney, who wants everybody to be happy, shows himself notably more of an actor than hitherto.

*Ascenseur pour l'Échafaud*, or *Lift to the Scaffold* (Director: Louis Malle) was the first film made by the young director of *Les Amants*, and it seems to me much better than that. No doubt the reason is that the form—this is a murder-and-suspense story—is easier to succeed in because more superficial, and less (in the absolute sense) worth while, but I'm a strong believer in praising good work of any kind, particularly if I enjoyed it. This is far too ingeniously worked out for a brief summary, but the central point is that a murderer (Maurice Ronet), after committing his perfectly-planned crime for love of the victim's wife (Jeanne Moreau), is trapped by a moment's forgetfulness that gets him stuck in a lift. Georges Poujouly and Yori Bertin are perfect as the teenagers who indirectly bring about his doom, and every step in the story is made believable as well as cinematically interesting with well-observed detail and character.

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

I thought I was going to be able to say, for once, that one of the best films in London was British . . . but no, it's gone already. The two best are French: *The Four Hundred Blows* (16/3/60) and *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (20/1/60); and

#### PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Cinema." Odeon, Peterborough.

For South African readers: University College Library, Salisbury, S. Rhodesia, from April 25.

"Punch with Wings." London Airport Central.

there's an admirable American murder-and-suspense story, *The Third Voice* (23/3/60).

However, that film which (see above) was too good to attract enough Londoners, the film I again state categorically is the best British film for years, *The Angry Silence* (23/3/60), heads the releases. It should run for 95 minutes; please notice, and complain, if it doesn't. Another good release is the excellent British comedy *The Battle of the Sexes* (9/3/60—84 minutes).

—RICHARD MALLETT

### ON THE AIR

#### Comic Drawing

FOR anyone still in doubt about the educational value of television I advise a short session with the BBC's "Stories in Pictures" series. A week ago this programme for the Schools was devoted to comic art—and I mean devoted. Comic art is often abused by the TV Channels. They see it merely as a clever parlour trick, a gimmick, a nifty bit of sleight of hand. Put the artist in front of a drawing board and hey presto! the funny noses and rib-tickling gags appear before your very eyes. And it is all so misleading. The humorist who deals in pictures must first of all have ideas, and the winning of comic situations from the matter-of-fact world about us calls for hard, disciplined thought, close and knowledgeable observation and at least a modicum of artistic afflatus. And nowadays it is almost impossible for the comic artist to remain in business for long without achieving a degree of mastery in the exacting literary art of writing captions.

All this, I thought, was revealed splendidly and tellingly in the recorded visits to the home town of J. W. Taylor, one of this magazine's most original and successful artists. Taylor is a schoolmaster in the Potteries and much of his published work is inspired by his experience in the

classroom and on the playing field. We saw him first at the blackboard, demonstrating to an obviously rapt and enchanted audience some of the more obvious linear moves in the game, the economy of hieroglyphic art that produces the range of expression and emotion needed in the draughtsmanship of cartoon. Then he talked, lucidly, warmly, amusingly, about the mental processes of the artist, about the artist's seeing eye and pursuit of drawable notions. We followed him and a young sketch-club on an outing to the industrial heart of the Five Towns, the potbanks, canals, smoke, and weird wonder of the factory landscape. And finally there was Taylor in the studio carefully constructing a drawing from remembered fragments of the visual feast.

There was a second interview with Peter Kneebone, another practitioner of black-and-white art, and this too was gay, thoughtful and instructive.

I was impressed by the amount of care and hard work the BBC had put into this short programme, by the excellent camaraderie (they can have this word, with my blessing) of Charles Lagus and Hugh Wilson, and by the editing of John Priestley and Margaret Ross Williamson. And grateful: this is how young comic artists are encouraged to put pen to paper, and this is how the *Punch* stream is eventually restocked with Fougasses, Thelwells, Langdons, Emetts, Brockbanks, Mansbridges and Taylors.

Another thoroughly interesting and useful programme is Granada's "What the Papers Say," which seems to retain its high standard week after week, whatever the news and whoever conducts the operations for the screen. I suppose that most adults are capable of reading between the lines of the popular newspapers and spotting the dishonest or dubious dodges by which some reporters, columnists and editors seek advancement, notoriety and circulation. But this necessary ingredient in the education of the citizen is a slow business, for the press itself does not willingly expose its seamy side, and few people have the time or the opportunity to embark on the "comparison reading" necessary for full revelation. So although "What the Papers Say" is particularly valuable for young viewers (and I hope they do view) it is immensely entertaining to their more worldly and disenchanted seniors.

Last week Brian Inglis drew on a story from Boston's *Atlantic* to question the integrity of a famous *Daily Mail* scoop by Noel Barber, and in spite of a little trouble with the teleprompter he managed to keep the pot of scandal boiling merrily and cynically until the balm of the commercials anointed the programme and laid it to rest. Is there any reason why the BBC should not take a leaf out of Granada's book and do its own review of the popular press? Title: "*La Presse Perverse*," or something. There's room for at least two bites at this scrumptious cake.

—BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

# Beds and Breakfasts By EDITH YORK

*A short story of family life*

*(With apologies to Miss Ivy Compton-Burnett)*

"SO everybody is down early this morning," said Fondant. "If it can be so this morning, why not every morning?"

"Because every morning is not this morning, father. It is mother's birthday," said Perkin, a young man of twenty-four, whose appearance did not belie the truth. "Many happy returns of the day, mother. I speak for us all."

"Then you should not do so," objected Warbeck. "We like to hear our own voices. This is with my love and best wishes, mother dear." He handed a small package across the table and laid it in front of his mother.

"My son," thundered Fondant, "have you no sense of decency or shame? You see your mother reduced to tears on this her birthday, making it no different from any other day. Come, Niobe, we will throw this rubbish into the fire." He picked up the picture, which Warbeck, who had long withstood his parent's opposition to becoming a painter, had made for his mother's birthday.

"Oh, no, father! Much as I admire your solicitude for my mother, and much as I deplore my older brother's lack of wisdom, my sense of justice forces me to protest. It is his work, and mother's property. You must let her deal with it in her own way, which we, her children, know will be the way of kindness."

"Latrina, my little daughter!" said her mother, opening her arms that she might embrace the girl whom she thus inaccurately defined. "As always, you speak with the tongue of an angel. Forgive me, my son, that my desire to see you a leader of men, dimmed, for a moment, my pleasure in the pretty little picture."

Warbeck winced at this description, and certainly it was an unfitting one, but he forbore to protest and breakfast was allowed to proceed at its usual pace, which was governed by the slowness of the movements of Ambleside, the butler.

"Now that we are alone," said Fondant to the woman who had sat

throughout the meal without speaking, "I can breathe freely and happily. Have you had a good night, Boadicea?"

"I have had a better morning," said his sister-in-law, a throbbing woman whose flaming hair might have been lit by her smouldering eyes. She passed him a letter. "It seems that I am not really Niobe's sister. I was found on a doorstep." She gave him a piercing, intimate glance. "Is the way of sin going to be made easier for us? Certainly our relationship, though not normal, will be less abnormal."

Fondant read the letter quickly, seeming to be unmoved. But when he laid it down his hand trembled. He crossed to her, held her close for a moment and then left her, as a man might who had an urgent task to perform. She gazed after him thoughtfully, one corner of her mouth turned up in triumphant satisfaction.

"Well, dear Aunt? Still silent? Will you walk with me as far as the stables?"

"Thank you, Perkin. There is work

waiting to be done, but I feel that to-day I might take a few moments for relaxation. Yes, that is what I feel."

"Because it is mother's birthday?"

"Birthday? Oh, yes. Because it is her birthday."

They turned to walk across the garden when a loud cry was heard from the house. Perkin turned and ran back into the hall, but Boadicea paused for a moment, the triumphant smile now complete.

"Latrina, what is it? Tell me what has happened."

"It is mother! Do not ask me: go and see for yourself. Our dear sad mother, who has always been so kind to us, will be so no more."

Perkin joined his father and brother, who were now discovering for themselves the truth of Latrina's assertions. Warbeck threw himself on his knees at his mother's bedside but Fondant simply stared at the place where his wife lay. She had apparently had a heart attack, falling with her face



"She never misses."



"Last one home polishes the cups."

in the pillow. She was as sombre and silent now as she was in life and he loved her just as little. But there were things to be done and he took Perkin away with him, reflecting with amusement that fifty-four years ago to-day she had caused even more commotion. The wheels that were now set in motion brought a string of visitors to the house, beginning with the doctor, who had been prophesying this death for so long that his surprise at its happening astonished them, and ending some three weeks later with the departure of the guests summoned to the wedding of Fondant and the woman who was not, after all, his sister-in-law.

"Well, my brothers," said Latrina. "We can look forward to a life which will be very different from the one our mother coloured for us."

"Coloured is not the word," said Warbeck. "Colour is what we shall have now and what I shall have, in particular," he added, going to his paint-box.

"Perkin, I have found these papers. They had slipped out of Aunt Boadicea's

desk and were on the floor. They are very odd."

"It looks as though she has been practising another handwriting. See how the style gradually changes from her own."

"Yes, but read the words. Does not this mean that the famous letter that set her free to marry our father was a fictitious work, written at this desk, beneath the very shadow of our mother?"

"Shadow? Yes, that," said Perkin thoughtfully.

Latrina turned pale. "There is something more. Just before I went to my doomed mother's room and found her dead I saw my father creeping from her door. I may say no more."

"That is the truth of the matter. We may say no more. Our father must be his own judge and I feel he will not be a hard one. How he will judge Boadicea I do not know. She has deceived him, for one thing; and she has caused him to make a marriage which, in these still unenlightened days, would not be a credit to him if the

truth were discovered. Why, father, I did not see you enter."

"You keep your eyes for things you have no business to see. Give me those papers. Have you no sense of decency or shame? Must I always be asking that question? And what was that about glass-houses? I will not have my children muttering in my presence."

"Oh, father mine, do not hide your sorrow under this cloak of wrath. We, your own children, will do all we can to lighten your burden of loneliness."

"Latrina, I shall not be alone. The woman who is now my wife will remain so. Does not her scheming show how much she loves me? But it is unfortunate that you have discovered this. If my ears did not deceive me, it led your talk into still more dangerous channels. I must ponder on the matter."

After he had done so and a few more days had elapsed the neighbours again thronged the house.

"Dear Boadicea," said Mrs. Gallstones, "how terribly sad for Fondant to lose his wife and two eldest children in so short a time."

"I am not dead yet."

"I beg your pardon. I was thinking of your sister."

"Niobe was not my sister."

"Dear me, how you confuse me. Well, I meant Niobe. It is all so odd. But of course there can be no connection between the three deaths?"

"Connection?" said Boadicea, looking startled. "Well they are all of one family, all buried in the same vault and all the funeral expenses have to be met from the same purse. I sincerely hope there will be no others. Must you be going? Well, Fondant, now we are alone we can begin life. Warbeck may go and get on with his painting and we will lie on the bed we have made."

"And lie about it, too. Ah well, so it must be."

☆

"Colonel Wellsted said: 'These train-washing methods are not allowed by the Geneva Convention and the British Army would not use them.'—*Evening Standard*  
Even British Railways seem reluctant.

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